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FANCIFUL FLOWER TALES

"THE FAIRY QUEEN HELD COURT, HER FAIRIES GATHERED AROUND HER"

FRONTISPIECE. *See* p. 16

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FANCIFUL FLOWER TALES

CHILDREN'S ROOM

OVERHEARD IN FAIRYLAND

BY

MADGE A. BIGHAM

AUTHOR OF "MERRY ANIMAL TALES," "STORIES OF MOTHER GOOSE VILLAGE," ETC.

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CHILDREN'S ROOM

BOSTON
LITTLE, BROWN, AND COMPANY
1911

CHILDREN'S ROOM

SCHOOL BOOK COLLECTION

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TO

SARAH DAVIES BIGHAM

THE LOVING STEPMOTHER

WHO WAS EVER MY GOOD FAIRY

PREFACE

MR. BARRIE'S fascinating play, "Peter Pan," was the real inspiration of this series of nature fairy tales, and the kindergarten children to whom the tales were first told, themselves very quaintly called them "The Peter Pan Tales."

This was because they had become very deeply interested in the history of the fairy boy, Peter Pan, and their sympathy greatly aroused because of his great fondness for stories. They understood why and how he used to hide with the swallows beneath the eaves of houses, or linger breathlessly near open windows to catch snatches of the tales told to the earth-children; how, too, in one of these trips to the earth-world, Peter had finally lost his shadow, and be-

cause of this was afraid ever to visit the houses of the earth-children any more, — just at the time, too, when he was most anxious to hear the end of the Cinderella tale, which pleased him most of all.

So, how was Peter ever to know that the Prince really found the little glass slipper and that it fitted Cinderella and she went to live with him in the palace?

This problem seemed to puzzle the kindergarten circle very much, until by and by, from various suggestions, we decided that one way in which we might help Peter out of his trouble would be to draw the pictures of all the stories we thought he would like to hear, and then hide them in a certain hollow tree — where a fairy boy would be sure to find them.

And thus began the weaving of the tales, for, with the ingenuity which must ever clothe the student of childhood, the special thread of interest was held and followed,

being made the basis of our spring nature-study.

Ostensibly the stories were all for Peter's delight — how did we know but *maybe* Peter Pan might be listening at that very moment, peeping shyly from the interlacing branches of some tall, rustic oak or moss-clad pine?

And so, while the stories were seemingly only for Peter's joy, in reality they were an effort to give to the children a certain ethical culture, creating reverence, sympathy, and higher ideals, while at the same time directing attention, observation, and interest to what was passed on excursions through the woods, so that in the future they might not be counted with those who having ears, hear not, and eyes, see not.

Many were the questions asked and many the tales woven in legendary form around trees and toadstools, flowers, grasses, ferns and other growing things, teaching

many lessons, — perhaps the chief among them being the love and mystery hidden in the life of a tiny struggling plant.

Teach a child to love nature and you teach him to love God. And yet, perhaps many of us, in our zeal for nature-study, overdo the work with the children and spoil results through too early technical work.

Interest in nature should be the one prime aim in the beginning. Awaken and stimulate interest, and all else must follow, since you thereby arouse and quicken the desire to know, leading up gradually to later and more advanced nature-study.

The ethical value of well-selected fairy tales cannot be over-estimated in regard to child life, and though the child will be wholly unconscious of it, every story in this book was written with a well defined purpose to strengthen the structure of character building, which should be the chief aim of all education.

In accordance with the wisdom of the Froebelian philosophy, the stories are positive in form, stressing only the good and the beautiful and tucking out of sight the evil, save where, through broad contrast, it may serve to strengthen and make more shining the pure and beautiful in life.

It is a kindly sympathy rather than the spirit of biting sarcasm that we should seek to develop in the child heart in regard to the shortcomings of others:

"So many ways, so many creeds,
So many paths that wind and wind,
When just the art of being kind,
Is all the old world needs."

MADGE A. BIGHAM.

ATLANTA, GA.

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PRELUDE

And Nature, the old nurse, took
The child upon her knee,
Saying: "Here is a story-book
Thy Father has written for thee."

"Come, wander with me," she said,
"Into regions yet untrod;
And read what is still unread
In the manuscripts of God."

And he wandered away and away
With Nature, the dear old nurse,
Who sang to him night and day
The rhymes of the universe.

— LONGFELLOW.

OVERHEARD IN FAIRYLAND

CHAPTER I

FAIRIES

DO you believe in fairies?

Oh, I hope you do, because all of the tales in this book are about fairies. Then too, if you believe in fairies they will believe in you, and if you do not — why, you miss the very best part of your life, that is all.

Once upon a time, however, there *was* a little boy who did not believe in fairies. I think his eyes were not put in just the right way, or perhaps it was his mother's eyes that were wrong — anyway, neither one of them had ever seen a fairy and it was a very sad thing.

Now, if you grew up to be as large as a grown-up mother without ever seeing a

fairy, the chances are that you never will see a fairy at all; but if you are just a little boy — why, there is always hope *then*.

It seemed queer though, that the little boy I am telling you about did not believe in fairies, for his little playmate Pansy did. She told the little boy there *must* be fairies, because the woods were full of them, and besides she had seen the sunbeam fairies dancing on the walls in dresses of red and green and violet and other beautiful colors.

And she had seen the raindrop fairies too, in queer little rain-coats of silver gray, and the snowflake fairies, so very soft and dainty, who come with little star-shaped blankets to cover the sleeping plants.

All of these his little playmate Pansy had seen, and many more besides which she told the little boy about, but he only laughed and shook his head as he said:

"There are n't any fairies, Pansy, — Mother says there are not."

And then, of course, the little girl was too polite to say anything more.

But old Mother Nature, — she is the very dearest fairy of all, — when *she* heard the little boy laugh and say, "There are n't any fairies," she shook her head too, very slowly, and said, "Tut, tut, to think of the child saying such a thing! If ever I get the chance I will show him a thing or two."

And she *did* get the chance the very next day, for the little boy took a notion he would take a walk through the woods, and although he walked down the most beautiful of little twisting paths, not a fairy did he see.

Now that is just the way with a little boy who does not believe in fairies — he could not see one, even if he tried.

And yet, all the time the fairies, and brownies too, were peeping at him from the cups of tiny flowers and moss-covered

banks and rustic trees and toadstools and silvery little water-falls.

But they had their tiny fingers on their lips, so, and kept whispering one to another, "H-u-s-h, here comes a little boy who does not believe in fairies," and then little peals of rippling laughter floated through the woods.

But the little boy never knew, and walked straight ahead with his hands in his pockets until, by and by, he grew tired and sat down on a clover bank to rest.

Now there was someone else walking through the woods that day, following close behind the little boy.

No, it was not Pansy, though I knew you would think so. It was a little old woman, all dressed in brown from her head to her feet.

Brown was her dress, so soft and rich; brown were the sandals on her feet; and brown the quaint little hood that covered her head.

The sunlight had mixed with the brown of her hair, and her eyes — they were the most beautiful brown of all, and made you think of the wealth of the forest woods, with murmuring brooks and singing winds, and lights and shadows mingled there, and the stars overhead so full of hope and trust.

Oh, yes! the stars believe in the fairies, I am sure.

Very softly did the little old woman's brown sandaled feet touch the pathway as she followed behind the little boy. Sometimes he would get far ahead of her, because *she* stopped to look at things.

The breeze fairies threw kisses at her as she passed, the sunbeams kissed her hair, and the daisies pressed her feet, they loved her so.

Sometimes she stopped and peeped in the nests where the baby birdlings slept, stroked them gently on their heads, and passed along with a crooning song.

Sometimes she stooped on the grassy banks of the brook and, trailing her soft fingers through the water, played with the speckled perch gliding by. Merry brown squirrels peeped at her from the hollow trees and showed where their winter nuts were stored, and the timid white rabbits hopped close to her side and told of their babies tucked away in the grass.

So the little old woman, all dressed in brown, passed on her way with a smile for everyone, and by and by she came to the *very* spot where the little boy had stopped to rest.

And the little boy lay fast asleep.

CHAPTER II

THE BEST FAIRY OF ALL

NOW, as you know, the little old woman all dressed in brown was none other than Old Mother Nature — the very same who had heard the little boy say, "There are n't any fairies, Pansy, — Mother says there are not."

And now the little boy lay sleeping at her feet.

For a moment the queer little woman in brown stood looking down into his sleeping face and then she stooped and kissed him softly on the cheek.

"Such a sad little boy," she said, "not to believe in fairies." Then, taking some fine golden fairy dust from her pocket, she sprinkled it over his head and shoulders,

and seated herself by his side to wait until he should awake.

But the little old woman did not fold her hands while she waited — there was always work for her to do, and taking a big brown bag from her belt, filled to the brim with seeds, she poured them in a steady stream into her lap, and busily began to sort them out — some in one pile and some in another.

This she was doing when the little boy at last opened his eyes, sat

up and looked with wonderment into her face.

"Little boys sleep while the fairies work," said the little old woman with a twinkle in her eyes. "I have been following behind you all through your walk and when you sat down to rest, I sat down to work."

The little boy seemed very much puzzled and stretched his eyes wider and wider.

"I did not see you," he said.

"No, and there were many other things you did not see, also," she replied. "It was a most beautiful walk.

"We passed birds and fish and flowers and rabbits and squirrels and — and fairies!" Then the little old woman threw back her head and laughed merrily, because the little boy looked so surprised, you know. *He* had not seen any of those things at all, — he most surely had not seen a fairy.

"Are *you* a fairy?" asked the little boy, looking straight into her beautiful brown eyes.

"To those who believe in fairies, I am," said the little old woman, with a touch of sadness in her voice. "Come, sit beside me, and help me sort out my children — there are more than you can count."

"Children? I see no children," said the little boy, "where are they?"

"Here in my lap," replied the little old woman, "in the woods around you, — everywhere. Look and you will find them.

"I am the nurse and mother of all that lives in forest or water — all that flies, all that creeps, all that swims, all that sleeps — all are my children and I nurse and watch over them. Would you not like to help me sort these seed babies?"

Somehow the little boy did not seem one bit afraid, but edged closer to the little old woman and began to do as she did.

"See," she said, "place the large seeds here, the small seeds here, the prickly seeds

here, the pod seeds here, and the winged seeds here — so.

"Handle them gently, little lad, for a plant baby sleeps in each one. They are a deal of care, and keep me busy, I can tell you, since they all have to be tucked in bed in different parts of the world — just where it is the best for them, neither too hot nor yet too cold; and they have to be fed and watered and cuddled the same as any earth-child.

"But then, at last, when they bud and blossom. Oh, but they are a joy to me then, and enough to fill the heart of any mother! Each little blossom has a tale to tell as to how it got its name — listen and I will tell you, while we work.

"This tiny brown seed, so small you can hardly see it, has never had a name until to-day. The fairies have named it Pansy for a dear little girl they know — a little girl with golden hair and dark, rich violet eyes."

"Oh!" said the little boy, jumping up

from his seat, "I believe I know that little girl, because a little girl named Pansy lives close by me — maybe it is she."

"Maybe so," replied the little old woman in brown, nodding her head at the little boy. "Maybe so — especially if she is the little girl who believes in fairies."

"And this seed?" asked the little boy, holding out a smooth, round white one, "tell me about this one."

"That seed," said the little old woman, "is the lady slipper. Its blossoms are in white and blue and pink and violet, and never was it seen upon the earth until after the story of Cinderella.

"Now *she* was a little girl the fairies loved too — because Cinderella most surely believed in the fairies.

"Look closely at its delicate blossom, and you will find it is shaped just like a little slipper. It is Cinderella's little slipper and the fairies placed it there.

"It is also said that the prince who rode through the forest in search of her whom the slipper would fit, lost the crimson feather from his velvet cap and the feather was never found, but in its place a strange new flower *was* found, and it looked so much like a feather that it was ever afterwards called the prince's feather.

"Perhaps the fairies had something to do with *that*," continued the little old woman, with a smile about her lips.

"Anyway, you will find them growing today, much to the delight of the earth-children — the lady slipper and the prince's feather."

"Yes, I have seen them myself," said the little boy, turning the small, round seed over and over in his hand, "but I never knew before about the fairies — I wish you were *my* mother."

"I?" said the little old woman, with a fresh ripple of laughter, "why, I could

never be spared for an earth-child's mother. How could *my* babies get on without me?

"What would the baby birdlings do, when lost from their mother's breast? What would the baby bees and the baby ants and the baby fish and the baby seed do — all waiting to be fed and watered and warmed and cuddled and shaken up for their spring awakening?

"No, I could n't be spared, I think, little boy, but at least I will be your fairy godmother, but — there, I hear someone calling me!"

And then what do you think happened?

The little old woman all dressed in brown grew dimmer and dimmer and dimmer, until there was n't any old woman at all, and though the little boy looked and looked, behind all the big trees and bushes and rocks, — all that he saw was an old brown stump, and yet, there in the palm of his hand was a small, round pea seed.

Now what do *you* think of that?

CHAPTER III

ORIGIN OF TOADSTOOLS

ONCE every year, between the hours of midnight and dawn, the fairy queen and all of the fairies from fairyland meet together and hold a festival.

Here they dance around the May-pole and sing and talk and sip nectar juice and dainty cream until just before sunrise, when they fly back again to fairyland.

It was in the heart of a deep and beautiful woodland that they met one night in May to hold this yearly festival.

Long silver-gray moss hung in cascades from tall cypress trees, and flowers rich and rare cast their fragrant perfume on the air, while the moon hung like a crystal lamp over the lake, throwing a shimmering path of light across its smooth surface.

Seated on a rustic throne of twisted roots the fairy queen held court — her fairies gathered around her.

They were talking together of the earth-world, and of their plans for the pleasure of the good children there, — what they had done the past year and what they would like to do the next.

The queen was made very happy by the reports she heard from her fairies, and rising from her rustic bower she said: "Come, fairies, one and all, let us make something very beautiful for the earth-children tonight.

"Let us make them a magic

wishing umbrella, such that the first one who stands beneath it, may make a wish and it will surely come true. Hasten, for the jewelled dawn will soon be parting the rosy curtains of day, and we have no time to lose."

So, with a song of gladness, the fairies sprang to their feet, and catching hands, danced around a fairy ring, singing and weaving as they danced, and by and by, suspended above their heads, was a most beautiful silken umbrella — cream on the outside and lined with the most delicate pink. The handle was pearl and it was quite the prettiest umbrella that anyone ever saw.

Then the fairy queen, who alone can sprinkle the wonderful wishing dust, dipped her fingers into the golden powder and sprinkled the dainty umbrella inside and out — and now it was quite ready for a fairy gift to the earth-children.

Calling two of the fairies who were fleetest of wing, she told them to carry the umbrella swiftly to the earth-land and place it on the top of a very high hill called The Hill of Faith.

The two fairies did as they were told, and then all of the little dream fairies, who carry around the pretty dreams, hastened on wings of love to the earth-land's sleeping children and whispered in pretty dreams what the fairies had done for them.

There are still many children now, like the little boy I have already told you about, who do not believe in fairies, and so it was in those days.

Night after night the little dream fairies visited their beds and told them over and over again about the gift of the wonderful wishing umbrella; but when morning came not a child would believe it enough to climb to the top of the high Hill of Faith.

True they stood in the streets and in

their doorways and *talked* about the wonderful umbrella, and even told what wish they would like to make should they be first to reach the hilltop and stand beneath its magic shelter.

One little blue-eyed boy with fair curls, whose eyes were brighter than any of the others, said he believed the umbrella must be on the top of the hill, as the dream fairies had told them.

He *thought* he could really see its dim outline and he started off alone, up the hill, with a happy smile on his rosy lips, but he had gone only a short way when the hot, shining sun made his head ache, and he turned back saying he believed he must have been mistaken after all, because he could not see the umbrella as before.

Then a group of merry-hearted girls and boys started off up the hill, but the sharp stones cut their feet, and one by one they, too, came back, tired and cross, and they

also said they did not believe the umbrella was there.

Now there was a little toad who hopped about in the grass at the foot of the hill, and though his coat was rusty and his eyes were dull, still he was wiser than the earth-land children, because *he* believed in fairies — this little toad.

The dream fairies had not been to him, but his ears were very sharp and he had heard the children talk and talk and talk about the wonderful wishing umbrella, until he knew it must be there.

Then, because the little toad had a wish he wanted to make, he started out one morning very early, up, up, up the high Hill of Faith, and he said to himself, "I'll go see for myself if what I hear is true."

So he hopped and hopped and hopped and hopped and hopped and hopped and hopped, and though the sun was very hot and the little toad longed for water, still he

would not stop, but hopped higher and higher and higher up the sharp, rocky path, until by and by the dark night came, and he could not see one inch ahead of him.

Still he would not turn back, but hopped on higher and higher, feeling his way in the dark, as he kept thinking of the wishing umbrella, which he believed he would surely find at the top.

And the morning found him still hopping.

Now all this time the little toad was hopping higher and higher up the hill, the earth-children stood in the valley below, gazing at the top, and trying to see without having to climb up.

"It is too high up, anyway," they grumbled; "no child could climb so high. Why did n't the fairies put the umbrella at the bottom of the hill if they wanted to give us anything? It is so much trouble to climb."

But fairies are very wise, you know, and besides they did not want a lazy child to

stand beneath the umbrella — because a lazy child would never know how to make a wise wish.

Then too, they did not want anyone who did not believe in fairies to find the wishing umbrella, and that was the very reason why they had placed it on the very top of the high Hill of Faith.

But the little toad still believed, and though the journey was a long one, it came to an end, and, one bright, beautiful morning, footsore and weary, he reached the top of the hill, and there was the beautiful fairy umbrella right before his eyes!

Now the little toad had planned to wish for the world full of flies — enough for himself and all the other toads, so that they might always have plenty to eat without bothering to catch them.

But somehow, when he saw the beautiful wishing umbrella which the fairies had taken so much trouble to make for the little

earth-children, he felt so very sorry that none of them had been wise enough to believe, and climb to the top of the hill and see the wonderful umbrella for themselves, and stand beneath its shade and make the wish they wanted most of all — the little toad thought all of this was so very sad that he hopped right up, underneath the wishing umbrella, and said:

"I wish that thousands of tiny little umbrellas, as beautiful as this one, may spring up all over the world in valleys and fields and woods, so that every little earth-child may see for himself and *know* for a truth of the fairies' kind gift — the wishing umbrella."

Then the little toad hopped from beneath the umbrella and, much to his surprise, there was sweet music all around him, and the beautiful umbrella slowly closed up like a flower, and rose higher and higher and higher until it was quite out of sight.

And the little toad's wish came true, because, sure enough, that very day the earth-children found scattered over fields and valleys and woods these dainty little fairy umbrellas of cream and pink, just large enough for a toad to sit beneath, — but not for an earth-child.

Often, it is said, the pixies gather the little umbrellas and place them in a ring — as you have sometimes found them — and here they sit when they have their moonlight picnics and laugh about the little earth-children who do not believe in fairies.

Now the fairy queen was very much pleased when she heard about the little toad and the very kind wish he had made, and she said:

"Forever and ever these dainty fairy umbrellas shall be known as toadstool umbrellas, in memory of the little toad who heard and believed."

And so they are to this day.

CHAPTER IV

WHY POPPIES MAKE YOU SLEEP

ONCE upon a time there was a little pixie who lived alone in a poppy blossom.

Deep down in the cup of the poppy he had a pretty room all his very own. There was a soft bed to lie on, draped about with silken rose-colored curtains, and there was nectar juice to drink and golden pollen-bread, which is sweeter and better than cake.

Then there was cooling dew in the rose-petal tub ever ready for his bath, and everything else you could think of to make a little pixie happy.

Now this little pixie was the son of a king, and that made him a pixie prince, you

see, so everybody did all they could to make him have a good time; he had only to make a wish and it was granted.

The spiders and caterpillars took special delight in weaving him the finest silken clothes; the sunbeam fairies dyed them in beautiful colors for him, and the sweet peas made for him the daintiest of slippers from the Cinderella pattern.

The bees flew for miles to bring his favorite honey, and for the cool, damp days, the pansies made for him rich velvet cloaks bordered in gold.

If at night the little pixie wished to take a ride, he had only to mount a firefly, who sailed through the air far swifter than a horse, and if in the daytime he chose to ride, there was a crimson hollyhock carriage drawn by harnessed butterflies of blue, white, and yellow.

The birds and the breezes sang their sweetest songs to him, and it surely seemed

that the little pixie prince ought to be very happy.

And yet he was not happy the least bit, and by and by he became so cross and queer that his friends did not know what to make of him.

For days and days he would lie on his silken bed and never a word would he have to say, except to scold and fret, and at last he said he was very sick, so they sent for a fairy doctor.

Now when the fairy doctor came and looked at the little pixie, he knew at once that he was suffering with ennui, — a most dreadful sickness indeed, and one which could only be caught from people living in the earth-land.

Of course the little pixie did not want to have ennui any more than you want to have mumps, but that did not make any difference, because he yawned and yawned and yawned *so* much that the fairy doctor

knew he did have ennui and nothing else, so there!

Now the only cure for ennui is to get right up and go to work and keep on working, and the very minute you forget the disease — why, it will leave you and go to somebody else, who has nothing to do.

"You see," said the fairy doctor to the little pixie, "everybody has been so busy thinking about you, and doing kind things to make you happy, that *you* have forgotten to make other people happy, and so you have just caught the ennui, like earth-people, and if you want to get well, why, you will have to get up and go to work."

Then the fairy doctor went away and left the little pixie to think about it.

Now the trouble was that this little pixie prince had never learned to work, but the longer he lay in his silken bed the sicker he grew with his ennui, so he just *had* to get up.

When he got out into the fresh air he

felt a little bit better and began to run and jump, and he played marbles and ball, and he climbed rose bushes and threw pebbles and hopped and skipped and rolled, and then danced for hours around the pixie ring, but still he could not forget about the ennui disease.

And no wonder, because playing and working are two different things, you know.

So, that night, when the little pixie went to bed, he was very miserable indeed, though the tiny poppy lady, who was his housekeeper, tied up his head with a cool rose petal.

The next morning when the fairy doctor came and looked at the little pixie he shook his head and said, "Your tongue shows you have n't been doing any work and your ennui is worse to-day than it was yesterday. You must *work* if you want to get well, for your disease is a very bad case indeed."

Then he went away again and the little

pixie got up and went once more into the fresh air, which always made him feel better, and wondered and wondered about the work he could do.

All at once he clapped his hands together gayly, and said, "Oh, now I know!

"I will learn to spin from the caterpillars and spiders, and spin myself a whole trunkful of pretty clothes. Then, I will learn from the bees to make honey and pollen-bread and I will store my pantry full, to last a whole year."

The caterpillars and the spiders and the bees were glad to help him, and soon he was as busy as a bee, sure enough, and in a few days had stored his pantry full of good things to eat, besides having made a whole trunkful of beautiful clothes.

But somehow, yes, somehow he just *could not* forget his dreadful ennui disease, and though he was a little better, still he was far from feeling well, and the tiny

poppy housekeeper had to tie up his head with a bandage from the plum blossom, which is considered even better than the rose-leaf bandage she had tried before.

When next the fairy doctor came he shook his head again, and said, "Your tongue shows work, but work of the wrong kind. You have worked only for *yourself* and that will never cure ennui — you must work for others."

Then, as before, he went away and left the pixie prince to himself, and the pixie was very sad and miserable indeed. His ennui grew worse and worse, until he just could not lie still.

The tiny poppy housekeeper came trailing in, wearing her prettiest flowered gown, and brought the little pixie some of the fresh honey he had made the day before.

"Maybe if you will eat something, you will feel better," she said. But the little pixie only turned his head to the wall and

cried, "Oh, what must I do to get rid of this terrible ennui?"

The tiny poppy housekeeper felt very sorry for him and, with her cool, soft fingers, smoothed the pain away from his brow, while she sat in deep thought.

At last she said, "Little prince, I think maybe I can help you if you are really willing to work for others. I can tell you something to do, but it is down in the earth-land, and you *might* not want to go."

"Oh, I am willing to go anywhere and to do anything to get rid of this terrible ennui disease!" said the pixie prince. "Tell me quickly."

"Well," replied the tiny poppy housekeeper, "down in the earth-world, where people live, there are many other diseases besides ennui.

"Now in this earth-world, sleep is the best cure for many of these diseases, but sleep is not always easy for them to get.

"THE PIXIE PRINCE HAS GONE TO THE EARTH-WORLD" *Page 37*

"There are sick, fretting babies, tired little girls and boys, weary mothers and fathers, worn-out men and women who long for sleep at the close of day, and because of the heat and the noise and their worries and troubles they cannot go to sleep, however hard they try. Now all of these need help.

"I, myself, know how to make a wonderful sleeping powder, which I use to put my own baby seeds to sleep, and I will gladly make some for you if you will make a bag of beautiful dreams to carry with it to the earth-land.

"You must make baby dreams, and dreams to make girls and boys happy, and dreams for mothers and fathers and all other tired men and women — dreams that will make them forget their troubles, and sleep the sleep of perfect rest. Are you willing to try?"

Of course the pixie prince was. He was

so happy he could hardly wait until his bag was finished. He made it of rose-colored satin, and stuffed it to the very brim with the most beautiful dreams — perhaps you have had one.

And by that time the tiny poppy housekeeper had the sleeping powder ready. Strapping the bag across his back, with a kiss and a wave of his hand to her, he mounted a white butterfly and flew straight to the earth-world.

Strange to say, the little pixie prince became so busy scattering his dreams and sleeping powder, that he forgot all about his ennui, and never has he remembered it from that day to this.

The fairy doctor called time and time again, but he could never catch the little pixie at home, and the tiny poppy housekeeper always said the very same thing:

"The pixie prince has gone to the earth-

world with a rose-colored bag of beautiful dreams."

And bless you! that is the reason why we sleep and dream to-day.

The pixie prince pays us a call, and the tiny poppy housekeeper is ever hard at work making the sleeping powder.

And that is why poppies make you sleepy — just smell them and see.

CHAPTER V

WHY APPLES HAVE STARS WITHIN

AND you did not even know an apple *had* a star within, you say? Why, then, I am afraid you have never eaten an apple in just the proper way.

The next time you have one, cut it round into three circles, and just in the very center of each circle you will find the picture of an apple blossom, and in the center of the blossom you will find a beautiful star — each one of the five points holding baby seeds.

How did the star get there?

Well, that is a story that Old Mother Nature told the other trees, and I will tell it to you.

A long, long time ago the very first apple seed lay in the ground fast asleep. The raindrop fairies carried her water to drink, and the sunbeam fairies kept her warm, while a little worm plowed the ground and made it soft about her feet.

One bright spring morning the bluebirds sang, "Wake up, wake up," and the baby apple seed stretched, rubbed her eyes, pushed right through the brown earth, and was very much surprised to find herself a small apple-tree.

She thought the outside world was a very beautiful place indeed, and wondered and wondered about the clouds and the birds and the sun. She thought the day was very beautiful, but when night spread its canopy over the world, spangled over with the silver moon and thousands of sparkling stars shining like so many candles in the sky, the little apple-tree reached out her limbs as high as she could and longed

with all her baby soul for just one star of her very own.

Now the little apple-tree had hardly made the wish when she heard the tinkle of tiny silver bells, and there, close to her side, stood the fairy princess of all the orchard trees, a star formed of rare diamonds sparkling in her crown.

"I have heard your wish, little tree," she said, "and the star shall be yours if you are willing to wait and work for it. Beautiful things come only through striving, and if, as you live, you seek to grow both strong and beautiful, the wish shall be granted you and the star shall be your own to do with as you choose." And then the fairy was gone.

For many days the little tree could think only of the fairy and the promised star, and as she thought, she worked, sending her roots deeper and deeper into the ground, and trying hard to keep her trunk and branches straight and strong.

This was not always easy to do, for the wind often blew roughly against the little tree, and the rain storms beat upon her, bending her body almost to the ground, and shaking her limbs from root to crown.

Still she did not forget or cease to try, and when the wind and rain had passed she lifted her head to the sunbeam fairies and waved to them for help, and little by little, inch by inch, she raised her body up again, and each time found herself stronger than before.

"It is the way of the Storm King," said the sunbeam fairies, as they danced through the leaves of the little tree. "He bends you back and forth and up and down to help to make you strong. You have only to try, and you can always rise again — straighter and stronger than ever before."

So the little tree learned not to be afraid of the great Storm King, and at night when she looked up into the spangled heavens, the twinkling stars smiled down on her and she was very happy indeed.

One morning a happy surprise came to the little apple-tree. She found when she awoke that all of her branches were filled with exquisite blossoms of delicate pink, and as she looked with joy into the heart of each wee bud, she *thought* she saw a star fairy, smiling back at her.

Day by day she gloried in the richness of her treasures, though now her work seemed only just begun, for there was

pollen dust to make and nectar juice to prepare for the bees, who so kindly helped her to care for the dainty blossoms.

But the little tree grew happier and happier — not so much because her blossoms were so beautiful, as that she knew the blossoms would soon change into apples, and that every one would hold baby apple seeds, which would some day be planted and grow into apple-trees like herself.

And so she did not grieve when, one morning, as it happens to all orchard trees, the pretty pink petals fell from the blossoms and drifted away to play with the wind.

Indeed, the apple-tree became so busy caring for the little apples which held her baby seeds that she forgot all about the fairy princess, who had promised her the beautiful star, forgot about herself, forgot *everything* but the baby seeds, and feeding and caring for them.

That is just the way it is with mothers, you know, — they often forget everything, but loving and working for their children.

And so, day by day, the apples which held the baby seeds grew large and round and juicy, and when the sunbeam fairies came to kiss them they blushed a crimson red, while the apple-tree rustled her leaves with laughter, so very happy was she.

What did *she* care for stars, now that she had her baby seeds? The earth-children were welcome to the red apples — she had made them juicy and red on purpose that they might be eaten, — for how else were the baby seeds to get out, I should like to know?

So, you see, the little apple-tree had grown very wise in her love for her baby seeds, and she was very much surprised one night when again she heard the tinkle, tinkle of silver bells, and the orchard fairy stood smiling at her side. In her hand

she held, not one, but a whole bagful of stars.

"Strong and very beautiful have you grown, little tree," she said, — "strong because you have forgotten yourself for others, beautiful because you have lived for others.

"Many months have I watched you battle against rain and wind storms, heat and drought; every time you have fallen you have risen again, stronger and more beautiful than before. Behold, here are your stars. Shall I make you a crown?"

"A crown oh, beautiful fairy? Not for me," said the tree. "That was a foolish wish of mine. But if stars you have to give, — give them, I pray you, to my baby seeds."

A smile passed over the fairy's face, and bowing her head in the moonlight, she replied, "It is ever as you say, little tree, and I grant to you your wish."

So it is that the earth-children find stars in their apples to-day; and tucked snugly away in each tiny point, you will find the brown seed babies, which the apple-trees delight to have you plant.

CHAPTER VI

ORIGIN OF THE TIGER LILY, SNAPDRAGON, AND ELEPHANT-EAR

ONCE upon a time there was an enchanted lake in the midst of a beautiful garden.

Over the great stone archway of the old gate, moss-grown and almost hidden from sight, one could read the words:

"Perfect Love Casteth Out All Fear."

Now only one drop of the water from this enchanted lake would cure sickness of whatever kind, and many were the travelers who came from far countries in search of the water — either for themselves or to carry to some loved one who was too ill to come.

Some who came were blind, some lame, others deaf or suffering with dreadful dis-

eases of many kinds, but though they came full of hope, they turned away sorrowfully, because they were afraid to enter in at the old stone gate.

This was because of the dreadful beasts in the garden that guarded the enchanted lake. They were evil and did not wish any one to drink of the healing water.

Now the garden was laid off in three circles — one within another, and right in the very center of the smallest circle was the wonderful lake, its waters as clear as crystal.

The first circle was guarded by a terrible dragon, and to those who came to the gate he opened his great mouth, snapped his jaws and shot flames of fire from his eyes.

No wonder those who came to the old stone gate grew frightened and turned away so sorrowfully.

The second circle was guarded by a huge tiger who gnashed his sharp teeth and

growled in rage, ready to tear anyone into shreds who should dare cross his pathway — so powerful were his sharp claws.

And yet even that was not all, for at the third and inner circle, where the enchanted lake lay like a sea of glory, an elephant — the largest and most powerful of any in the whole world — stood ready to seize you with his dreadful trunk and crush every bone in your body.

So, you see, it took the bravest of people to enter into this beautiful garden — however much they longed for the water — even after they had read the sign over the moss-covered gate.

Now, far away across the mountain from the enchanted lake lived a little boy whose name was Lionel — perhaps because he was brave and strong like a lion.

But at this time I am telling you of, the little Lionel was very unhappy, because his dear father was very, very sick, and none of

the doctors in the land could make him well.

So the dear mother sat by his bedside with tear-stained cheeks and longed and longed that he might grow strong enough to walk to the beautiful garden and drink from the enchanted lake whose waters would surely make him well.

"Let me go, Mother mine," said little Lionel, putting his arms about her neck — "only one drop of the water will make Father well, and surely I can bring you that."

"Have you not heard, my little son, of the terrible monsters that stand ready to devour those who enter within the gates of the beautiful garden? You, a little boy, could never even reach the brink of the enchanted lake.

"You would never come back to me, and I should be robbed of both husband and son. Oh, no, I could never let you go."

So spoke the troubled mother, but the

sick father grew so much worse with the dreadful burning fever, and the little Lionel begged so hard to be allowed to go, that by and by the mother said:

"Go, and if you never come back to me, I shall surely die. But listen, my boy," and placing her hand beneath his chin, she raised his head till the blue eyes looked into hers.

"Listen, where there is no fear, there is no danger! Look the wild beasts straight in the eyes, even as I am looking into yours. Be not afraid, and the dear God will help you."

"And I shall come back to you, Mother mine," said the brave little Lionel. "When I get to the garden gate I shall think so much of you and dear Father, that I shall forget all else. I shall not be afraid of anything."

Then he covered her tear-stained cheeks with kisses, and hurried away in the early morning light.

The road was rough and long across the steep mountain way, and the sharp stones cut the little Lionel's feet until they were bruised and sore, but still he climbed on and on, ever thinking of the loved ones he had left behind, and of their joy when by and by he should return with the healing water from the beautiful garden.

After traveling many hours he at last reached the top of the mountain, climbed down the side into the cool valley below, and found himself in sight of the beautiful garden.

But as he gazed in wonder on the waters of the shimmering lake in the distance, the deep growls of the wild beasts within the walls fell upon his ears, and for a moment the little Lionel was *almost* afraid, and felt like turning and fleeing back to the safe cottage home, beyond the mountain — the little home that seemed dearer to him, just now, than ever before.

"Better run back! Better run back!" strange voices from the trees kept whispering.

But just then, over the archway of the old stone gate, the little Lionel spelled out very slowly the words:

"P-e-r-f-e-c-t L-o-v-e C-a-s-t-e-t-h O-u-t A-l-l F-e-a-r."

Then, doubling up his small fists, he shook them at the voices in the trees and said:

"Hush, I *shall* not go back! You cannot frighten me. I love my father, and dragons and tigers and elephants shall not drive me back until I have filled my bottle with the healing water."

Then, standing on tiptoe, he lifted the rusty latch and stepped inside the beautiful garden.

With a mighty roar the ugly dragon started toward him, but the little Lionel remembered his mother's words, looked the

great beast straight in the eye and passed him by unharmed.

On and on he followed the winding circular walk, never for a moment glancing behind, and just as he reached the second circle, with an angry growl the huge spotted tiger rushed at his throat.

But again the little Lionel remembered his mother's words, looked the great beast straight in the eye, and passed by him, — again unharmed.

And now with a firmer tread he followed the broad gravel walk which led him into the third and last circle, where lay the wonderful enchanted lake.

But just as he caught sight of its clear water sparkling like twinkling diamonds in the sunlight, with a roar that seemed to shake the very earth beneath him, the great powerful elephant dashed toward the little Lionel as if he would surely crush him to pieces!

But no, no! surely the dear God helped him then, for still he was unafraid, and, keeping his eyes on those of the great elephant, he passed on his way with a steady tread, not even glancing behind him — thinking only of the sick father, the anxious mother, and her last words to him.

And now, only think, he stood at the brink of the enchanted lake, by the waters so clear that they reflected back the brave, sweet face of the boy who stooped to fill his bottle there.

But the little Lionel did not linger you may be very sure, and when he had filled his bottle to the very brim with the healing water, he turned to go away, when lo! a most wonderful thing indeed had happened.

There was now no terrible elephant standing in the pathway to destroy him, no dreadful tiger, no hateful dragon, — none of these, — but in their places, strange, new flowers grew.

The elephant was changed into a beautiful plant with leaves so large and cool and green that you would never think of them as being like an elephant at all — unless it were his *very large* ears.

And in the second circle, where the dreadful tiger had been, stood only an exquisite, crimson tiger lily, flecked with spots of black as soft and velvety as a tiger's skin — you have seen the lily since, I know.

And as he drew near to the old stone gateway, not a dragon did he see, but instead, a delicate, drooping blossom of dainty rose color, which has a mouth, to be sure, that can open and shut, but never bite.

So the dragon flower and the crimson lily nodded their heads and wafted their fragrance on the summer breeze as the boy passed on his way down the walk and through the old stone gateway.

Such a happy, happy boy was the little Lionel now.

Birds sang from the tree tops, the sunbeams danced, and all the world seemed glad, and the song that the winds and waters sang seemed ever to be the same :

"Perfect Love Casteth Out All Fear."

And now, what need have I to tell you more of my story, — of the mother's joy when her boy came back to her, of the sick father made well by the healing water, and of the brave little Lionel happiest of all?

There was no more fear of the beautiful garden. It was said that those who afterward visited there were made glad because of the velvety, spotted lilies, the delicate dragon flowers and cool green leaves of the elephant-ears that were found in place of the frightful beasts, which were seen no more.

And the healing water was free to all.

CHAPTER VII

WHY THE PERSIMMON TREE HAS ITS FRUIT IN THREE COLORS

I HAVE already told you about the little pixie prince who had the ennui disease. Now the persimmon tree makes me think of a little brownie who had the meddler disease, and I must not forget to tell you about him.

The meddler disease was considered by the fairies to be quite as bad as the ennui disease, though it was just the opposite kind of trouble.

You see, while the ennui disease made you lie in bed and yawn all the time and wish to do nothing at all, the meddler disease kept you *moving* all the time, and always going into things that were none of your business.

The bees had already tried to teach this little brownie a lesson by leaving their sharp stings in his fingers for meddling with their honey.

And the wasps had tried to teach him a lesson too, about meddling with their wonderfully-made house and tearing it down.

It was said that even the billy-goat had taken a hand in trying to teach this little brownie to stop meddling with other people's affairs, but he would not stop.

By and by the orchard princess went to the queen of the fairies one night, and told her that someone — she knew not who — was meddling with the orchard trees.

It was in the spring when all the trees were so busy trying to grow large luscious fruit. They had spent weeks and weeks nursing baby buds and blossoms into green fruit, and now, before they could ripen the fruit, ready to eat, the orchard princess found the baby pears, peaches, and plums

lying all over the grass under the trees — each with the print of somebody's tooth in it.

When the fairy queen heard about the green fruit being pulled she was very sorry indeed.

"The first thing to be done," she said, "is to find out who it is that is troubling the trees. Have you any idea?"

But the orchard fairy shook her head. "I think it must be the little brownie who has the meddler disease," she replied, "but I am not sure."

"Then we will find out," said the fairy queen.

So calling two of her fairies to her, she changed one into a green caterpillar and the other into a blue bird and sent them into the orchard to watch.

They had not watched very long when, sure enough, this very same little brownie with the meddler disease hopped over the orchard fence and began climbing the trees,

biting the fruit to see if it was ripe, and then throwing it on the ground.

"And now," said the fairy queen to the orchard princess, when she heard about it, "we must try and cure this little meddler brownie before he grows any worse, or he will spoil the fruit crop for the earth-children every year, and they will have neither pears, plums, nor apples to eat. Something must be done at once."

And so the queen and her fairies gathered together and talked and talked about the best way to cure the little brownie of his troublesome disease.

Some of them thought it might be a good idea to let the spiders spin a web-bag all around him so he *could n't* get out to go to the trees.

And others thought it would be a good thing to tie a block to his foot so he could not climb over the orchard fence.

But the fairy queen is wiser than all the

fairies, you know, so she shook her head at these plans and said:

"No, I hardly think that will really *cure* the little brownie of his disease. We do not wish to tie him so he *cannot* go to the trees, but we want to manage so that he will not *wish* to meddle with the trees — that is the best cure," said the fairy queen.

She thought for a few moments longer, and then she smiled and said, "Come, I have a plan now. I had almost forgotten about a queer seed Old Mother Nature gave me the last time she was here — a persimmon seed which has never yet been planted on the earth.

"This tree bears a fruit which will surely cure the little brownie if he dares eat it before it is ripe. We will plant it at once."

So, with a band of fairies dancing after her, the fairy queen led the way, and in the midst of the shady orchard trees they planted the queer persimmon seed.

Now as the queen wanted the tree to be growing in the orchard the next morning when the little meddler brownie visited the trees, she blew some of her magic fairy-dust over the spot where the seed had been planted, and a very wonderful thing happened.

Up, up, up, the persimmon tree grew, taller and larger than any other tree in the orchard, with every limb full of fine, green fruit, larger than that on any other tree. And then the fairies tripped away.

The next morning, when the little meddler brownie climbed over the fence, he saw the new tree the very first thing, and with a hop and a skip he ran towards it, singing:

"Mi, mi, me, ne O!
Why have n't I seen that tree before!"

And then he pulled the biggest persimmon he could find, popped it into his mouth and began to chew.

It was a bitter dose, and the little brownie tried his best to spit it out, but the queer thing about it was that he could not spit it out, so there was nothing to do but to keep on chewing until it was all gone.

And then when he had swallowed it, why, his mouth was all shrivelled up on the inside like an egg skin, and when he tried to straighten out the outside of his face, why, it seemed as if it had been frozen into shrivelled-up wrinkles, and try as he would, he could n't straighten a single wrinkle out.

So there he was with his mouth puckered inside, and the right side of his face all wrinkled outside.

But the meddler disease is a hard disease to cure, and the very next morning the little brownie was back in the orchard as before, and when he saw the new tree again the green persimmons were no longer there, but in their place hung large, golden-yellow persimmons, as large and smooth as could be.

And again the little meddler brownie ran quickly across the grass to it, singing:

"Mi, mi, me, ne O!
Why have n't I seen that fruit before!"

And again he scrambled up the tree and popped a big yellow persimmon into his mouth.

He thought because the persimmon was yellow it surely must be ripe.

But the little brownie was very much mistaken indeed, for the dose was as bitter as the first, and spit it out he could not, so he had to chew and chew, as before, until it was all gone, and *then*, — why, the *left* side of his cheek was all shrivelled up too, inside and out, just as the right side had been.

That was n't any fun I can tell you, and though the little brownie smoothed and smoothed and tried his very best to straighten out his wrinkled face he could not do it, and

now he looked more like a shrivelled up potato than anything else.

For the first time in his whole life the little brownie began to feel ashamed that he was such a foolish little meddlesome brownie, and he decided he would stop meddling with things that were not his; then, as he did n't know what else to do, he sat on the grass at the foot of the tree and began to cry.

It was then that the orchard princess felt sorry for the miserable little brownie and came from behind the tree where she had been watching him all along.

"Why are you crying, little brownie?" she asked. "Can I help you?"

"Oh, if you would only straighten out my face!" cried the little brownie:

"Mi, mi, me, ne O!
I never was in such a fix before."

"I wish I *could* straighten your face for you," replied the orchard princess, "but I cannot. I fear you have the meddler dis-

ease, and it has settled in your face from eating green fruit.

"Why do you meddle with things that are not yours?"

"Oh, I do not know," said the little brownie, "but I never shall again. Tell me what will cure me, do please."

"A ripe persimmon is the only thing that can cure you and straighten out your face," said the orchard princess.

"The fruit you have been eating is from a tree sometimes called the meddler's tree. Its fruit is first green, then yellow, and at last a beautiful orange-red.

"It is only then that the fruit is fit to eat; so mellow and sweet are the luscious persimmons then, that just one mouthful will part your lips into smiles.

"But until that time when the persimmons are full ripe will you have to wait for your face to be straightened out, — eat but one then and you shall be cured."

Then, all in a twinkle, the orchard princess was gone.

Well, it was a long weary time for the little brownie to wait, — with his face all shrivelled up too, — because persimmons do not ripen from yellow to orange-red until the frost fairies sprinkle their powder over them, and the frost fairies did not put themselves out to hurry for a little meddlesome brownie, I can tell you.

But while he *did* wait, the little brownie had plenty of time to learn his lesson well, and that pleased the fairy queen very much.

He visited the orchard every day, to be

sure, but only to watch for the ripe orange-red persimmons, and not a time was the little brownie known to meddle with anything else.

But one morning he was made very, very happy indeed, for when he awoke he found that the frost fairies had surprised him in the night and sprinkled their white powder everywhere.

How the little brownie did skip and hop to the tree, singing:

"Mi, mi, me, ne, O,
Never was I so happy before!"

And sure enough, the tree hung full of luscious ripe persimmons, of orange-red, and when the little brownie pulled and ate one it was so sweet and delicious, why, the little brownie laughed out loud, and all in a twinkle —

He was cured of the ugly meddler disease!

And how glad he was to have his face straightened out once more!

So now you know why the persimmon tree has her fruit in three colors — green, yellow, and orange-red. It is the way she has of fooling meddlers.

Were you ever fooled?

CHAPTER VIII

FLOWER PIXIES

SOMETIMES I try to think which I like the best, — fairies or brownies or pixies.

Sometimes I say fairies, because they can change themselves into anything they please. And sometimes I say brownies, because they are so very funny. And then, again, I say pixies, because *they* are so very small they can live in the flowers.

And so I really cannot tell which I do like best.

But one thing I know, and that is, the pixies have a very good chance to find out where the good children live, because their little flower houses are so often pulled and put into vases, right in the very room where the children play, you see.

Now pixies really enjoy having their flower houses pulled and carried into the children's homes, if only people remembered to pull the flowers with *long* stems, so that they may have no fear of dropping into the water when their flower houses are placed in vases to keep them fresh.

Now there was a little pixie once who wandered back to fairyland with every thread of his pretty silken clothes dripping wet.

He said a little boy had pulled his pansy house while he was beneath the velvet petals fast asleep. And the little boy had not only pulled his house with a very short stem, but had actually dropped him down into a *great, large* rose jar, instead of a small pansy vase, and when the little pixie waked up, why, he was floating around on the top of the water, and his white velvet suit, and his violet sash and cap, and his white slippers were spoiled and dripping wet.

He tried his best to scramble up the

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smooth side of the rose jar, but he slipped back every time until a dear little girl, who must have seen him, lifted the pansy up out of the jar, and placed it in a pretty, little blue vase. And the little pixie skipped out of the window as fast as ever he could, and hurried off to fairyland to get a new suit of clothes.

But he did n't forget about the little girl who helped him out of the jar. Her name was Princess Wee, — because she was little, and because she was kind and good like a real princess. All of the pixies loved her and wanted to do something for her because she had helped the little pansy pixie out of the water.

"To-morrow is the little Princess Wee's birthday," said the pansy pixie, flying from flower to flower, with his new, blue velvet clothes on. "I heard her mother say so, and she is coming into the woods to gather wild flowers. Let us all watch for her."

"Oh, you have the days mixed up," said a little daisy pixie, in white silk suit and yellow sash. "I can see her coming across the grass now. What a light, quick step she has, — what soft white hands!"

Then all the tiny flower pixies laughed with joy, waving gayly to her from their flower homes, and throwing kisses, — one, two, three, — as on she passed.

"Come, pull our blossom homes," they cried; "we know your hands are gentle, and you pull long stems. Stay and play with us in happy pixie land."

So the little Princess Wee smiled with joy at their kind invitation, and seated herself on a flowery bank with her lap full of clovers and daisies and shy, wild violets.

Then from every pretty flower a pixie jumped, and catching hands they danced gayly round the little Princess Wee, their sashes of brown and purple and yellow fluttering in the breeze. Pixies always

wear sashes and slippers to match the colors of the flowers in which they live.

Oh, but it is a beautiful sight to watch these pixies dance round and round a pixie ring! Anyone who has sharp eyes can find the print of their tiny feet in the woods, going round and round in the circle.

So swiftly and so lightly did they trip around the Princess Wee that she fell fast asleep while watching them. And then each little pixie placed his fingers to his lips, and the daisy pixies said, "Hush, she is asleep! We will be very quiet and let her rest."

Then they fanned her cheeks with perfumed flower petals, and some of them hurried away and found a great, big toadstool umbrella, and placed it over the Princess Wee's head, so that the sunshine might not waken her.

"Come," said the clover-blossom pixies, "we will gather ferns and leaves and make a coverlet for her feet too, so that she may

not catch a cold while sleeping in pixie land."

"And, oh!" whispered the pansy pixie, "let us make a surprise for her when she awakes. Let us make the little Princess Wee a play-house."

"Yes, let 's do!" said the violet pixies. "We will build it all around her while she sleeps."

And so they did. With pink shells and smooth, white pebbles they marked off the rooms, and in every room they placed a carpet of soft green moss, fit for a princess to tread upon, and there were gray granite stones with mossy cushions too, which made delightful chairs.

And then the pixies peeped beneath the toadstool-umbrella, but still the pretty blue eyes of the princess were closed and her lips were parted in a smile — perhaps she dreamed of the pixies, who knows?

"Come," said the violet pixie, "we have

made the play-house, but where are the playthings? Perhaps she would like a doll and a tea-party."

"Yes, yes!" replied the daisy pixies, "and a large, flat rock will do for the table. Let us search for dishes, — where shall we find them? Hurry, before she wakes!"

Then up the tall oak trees they scampered to find the largest acorns, whose caps made beautiful saucers for green acorn cups scooped out by the pixies, — as smooth and delicate as the finest china.

Nasturtium leaves were round like plates, and matched the cups and saucers; and beneath the roots of the heartleaves they searched for dainty, hidden brown pitchers, which held fresh water, cool and sweet.

The bees gave honey for the party, and there was pixie cake and fruit and candy, made from pollen and nectar juice. But where was the doll, if it was to be a doll-party?

The violet pixies looked at the daisy pixies and the daisy pixies looked at the clover pixies, — but only for a moment; then they all scampered off to the fields of waving corn and found, oh, so *many* little corn babies, with long silken dresses and charming little faces which the pixies marked themselves — eyes and nose and mouth.

And only guess what they made from the corn stalks! Doll beds and doll chairs and doll cradles!

Surely these would make Princess Wee clap her hands in joy.

And when they came back, — yes, the princess was rubbing her eyes, and when she sat up and looked around, she opened her eyes very wide, because she was *so* surprised to see such a beautiful play-house built all round her, and a doll-party, and all the corn-silk babies waiting for her at the table.

So Princess Wee sat at the head and held

the smallest baby, and poured fresh water from the heartleaf pitchers, and drank from the tiny acorn cups, and ate pixie cake and fruit and candy from dainty green leaf plates.

Now was n't that a beautiful birthday party that the flower pixies gave to the Princess Wee, because she was so kind and good?

CHAPTER IX

WHY THE LEAVES SHAKE

ONE bright, sunshiny morning all the leaves on the tall poplar tree waked up in a bad humor.

I 'm sure I cannot tell just why, because the dew fairies had given them their bath, and the sunbeam fairies had dried them off, and the good mother tree had given them all a breakfast of fresh, sweet sap, which she herself had made for them.

But still the leaves were cross and unhappy, and with pouting lips and downcast eyes they stood stiff and still as they clung to the branches of the mother tree.

The little tree fairy was the first to notice it.

She lived in the branches of the tall poplar tree, and it made her very unhappy to see

the cross ill temper of her playmates, the leaves.

She asked them what the trouble was and if she could help them. But not one word would any of the leaves say. They only poked out their pouting lips and stood stiffer and crosser than ever before, even refusing to wave a good morning to their kind, little fairy friend.

No fairy likes to live with anyone who is cross and crabbed, you know, so this little tree fairy flew away, as fast as she could go, to Cloudland, where she could find more pleasant company I suppose.

The little sunbeam fairies were busy making a silver lining for the big black cloud, and hardly had time to look up from their work when the tree fairy entered.

"Oh," said the little tree fairy, "what a beautiful silver lining you are working on! I wish I could make some silver linings for the little poplar leaves!

"They are so cross to-day and I want to make them happy."

"We will be glad to help," said the little sunbeam fairies. "Come, and we will teach you how to make a silver lining!"

So the little tree fairy sat down and, threading her needle with a golden thread, was soon busy making a silver lining for every little leaf on the tall poplar tree, — and just to the pattern of their green dresses.

By nightfall she had finished every one and the little sunbeam fairies went with her to fit them on.

But the little poplar leaves were fast asleep and did not know when the fairies fitted their pretty silver linings, and when they waked up next morning, why, they still did not know, because they were too stiff and cross to look, and sat as still as ever without even smiling a good-morning to anyone.

Of course it made the little tree fairy very sad to find that the poplar leaves were not glad after she had worked so very hard to make them each a silver lining.

But she could not, she just *could* not live with little leaves that were always cross, you know. So off she flew again to Cloudland to find someone who would help her get the leaves in a good humor once more.

This time she went to the rainbow fairies and asked them if they could tell her what to do.

"It must be very sad," said the rainbow fairies, "to have to live with anyone who is always cross. We made a beautiful rainbow yesterday, across the sky where we were sure the poplar leaves could see it, but we think they did not even look. We are sure they did not smile. Why not tell the Storm King? He will blow them away in a twinkle."

"Oh, but I do not wish them blown away," sighed the little tree fairy. "I only want to make them happy again. I like to see them laugh and dance and sing the soft little songs they know. I miss them so when they are stiff and cross!

"If only they would look at the pretty silver linings I have made for them, I 'm sure that would make them smile again."

"Well, we don't know what to tell you to do about it," said the rainbow fairies, "unless you are willing to go to Zephyr Castle where the tickle fairies live. A tickle fairy can make anything in the world laugh."

Now Zephyr Castle belonged to the great Storm King. It was the nursery where he kept the soft baby winds that had never grown up strong and fierce enough to go out with him on his visits to the earth world.

The little tree fairy was afraid of this

great Storm King, because she had seen him blow away tall trees and large houses — he *might* blow down the poplar tree, she thought, if he knew about the cross leaves. That would ruin her pretty bower, and besides, the poplar leaves would wither and die.

So, with bowed head, she turned sorrowfully away from the rainbow palace and started towards the earth-world again.

As she was walking on her way, the little tree fairy passed a great high cloud mountain, and stopped to listen, for, from a cave in the side of the mountain she heard music, wonderful and grand.

It sounded like a great wind organ, and its thundering tones rolled full and deep, then growing fainter and fainter and soft and low like the good-night carol of evening birds.

The little tree fairy was so charmed as she listened to the echoing tones that she crept closer and closer to the wonderful

music, and the first thing she knew she found herself standing right in the very doorway of the great cloud mountain where lived the Storm King, — and it was the Storm King himself, playing in his great concert hall!

A wonderful king he was, — large and strong, with great broad shoulders, and hair and beard long and white like the driven snow. His cheeks were red and firm, and his eyes, the most wonderful of all, were bright and sparkling, yet deep and calm, — places where dreams like to lie.

The little tree fairy looked and listened, — she *could* not feel afraid of one like that, — and standing with uplifted head she waited until the Storm King had finished playing and closed his wonderful organ.

Then he turned and held out his hand to the little tree fairy, as though he knew she had been standing near, and asked her what it was that made her sad.

"It is because of the leaves on the tall

poplar tree," she said; "they are so very cross and stiff I cannot bear to live with them.

"I have made them each a silver lining for their dress, but they have been too cross even to look at them, and I am afraid, if I live with those who are always cross, I myself might grow cross too."

And then a crystal tear stole down the cheek of the little tree fairy.

"Ah, I see," said the great Storm King, drawing the little tree fairy close to his side. "I see. Of course you do not want to grow cross, my child, — that would be sad, indeed. For I have never heard of a cross fairy of any kind, and it must be very unpleasant, above all, for a little fairy to live, day after day, with someone who is always cross.

"And so you believe that *I* can help you?

"Have you not heard, little one, that I, the great Storm King, am very powerful?

So strong that my very breath bends trees and snaps them off like a thread, uproots and casts them crushed and broken to the ground? That I scatter houses like paper and straws — that mortal men flee from me, and hide from the lightning I hold in my hand?

"Hast thou not heard?"

"Yes," replied the little tree fairy, softly, "all of this have I heard, and I know that you are powerful and strong. But you are gentle too, and your heart is always kind, — your music tells me so. I know that you can help me if you will."

"And I will," said the great Storm King, patting the little tree fairy gently on the head. "I will, because you believe.

"Go back to thy home in the tree, little fairy, and all shall be well with thee. I promise the leaves shall never be cross again, for I shall give the baby Zephyrs charge concerning them, and morning, noon,

and night their merry little sides shall shake with laughter. I, the great Storm King, promise this.

"And why? Because of thy love, little one. Love is ever stronger than force. Go now, thy wish is granted thee."

And so it was as the great Storm King said, for when the little fairy reached the tall poplar tree again, the tickle fairies from Zephyr Castle had been there ahead of her, and with their slender fingers, dipped in laughter dust, had flown in and out among the leaves — thousands of tiny, tiny Zephyr fairies — and how they did tickle those leaves!

They tickled and tickled and tickled, and you should have seen those poplar leaves laugh!

Pouting lips went in and dimpled smiles came out, and the little leaves began to shake, and they laughed and laughed and laughed, until some of them tied themselves

in double bow-knots and rolled upon the ground, and others turned themselves wrong side up, and — *then*, they saw their silver linings, which the little tree fairy had made for them, and that tickled them so, why, they laughed all over again!

And then the leaves on all the other trees caught the laughing spell, and they, too, shook with laughter, and together they laughed and laughed and laughed, — all the leaves in all the trees shaking with laughter until the whole world caught their joy and echoed it back.

And don't you know the little tree fairy was very, very happy?

The great Storm King has never since forgotten his promise, because as you yourself may see, the Zephyr fairies are always busy tickling the leaves and sprinkling laughter dust, and all little leaves have long ago forgotten how to be cross or sad.

CHAPTER X

THE ORIGIN OF PUSSY WILLOWS

IT seems that the fairies are always on the lookout for kind deeds, and whenever they find one they like to change it into something beautiful for the earth-children.

Now it was the small baby willow that asked the big mother willow tree why it was *she* bore such lovely, soft gray pussies on her branches each spring.

And the mother willow replied: "There is always a reason, little one, for everything beautiful, and the reason why willows have pussies, so soft and gray, is because of a kind deed a willow tree did once, long ago. I will tell you about it."

Then she told this story: —

"The willow tree that did this kind deed grew on the bank of a deep river and her wide-spreading branches almost swept the surface of the water.

"One morning, while she was busy caring for her baby buds and new leaves, she heard rapid footsteps, and in another moment she saw a boy rush down to the edge of the river and throw something into the water with a great splash! Then he was off again as quickly as he had come.

"Now what do you suppose the big willow tree saw floating and struggling in the water, just beneath the shade of her limbs?

"Three of the softest, prettiest, gray kittens that anyone ever saw.

"They were just about the color of blue curling smoke, and each one wore a pair of fuzzy, silver-gray mittens, with the daintiest of little pink cushions tucked underneath.

"Just as the willow tree was wondering

what to do about it, she heard something else come flying down the path, jumping over bushes and stumps and scattering the dry leaves in her pathway as she ran.

"It was the mother of the dear little soft gray pussies, and when she reached the river's edge and saw her own baby kittens struggling in the deep water, she jumped right in, with a great splash, and tried her best to save their lives.

"Poor baby pussies! the water was getting into their pretty blue eyes and running into their noses and ears and mouths, and in a very few minutes they most surely would have been dead, had it not been for the kindness of the big willow tree.

"'Quick, oh, quick!' she cried, bending her branches low over the water's edge. 'Catch my limbs, hold tight, and I will hold you above the water.'

"And then, one by one, the mother cat and her three baby kittens were caught up

by the strong branches of the willow and held tight, until the brave mother cat brought each half .drowned kitten safely to the shore.

"In the snug hollow of the big willow tree she made them a bed and soon licked them all dry with the queer pink towel mother cats carry around in their mouths.

"The baby kittens seemed to like their new home very much, and in a few hours were as well and happy as ever.

"Perhaps they thought it was better to live in the woods with a kind willow tree than in a house with an unkind earth-child. I know the mother cat believed this, because she did not try to carry her kittens away, but began to make herself at home as they did.

"The willow tree was very glad of this and she enjoyed watching the baby kittens.

"They grew fatter and plumper and rounder every day, and their mother was

kept busy trying to raise them in just the right way.

"She showed them their soft, silver-gray mittens and told them how to keep them washed clean with their long, pink tongues.

"And she showed them their sharp little claws and told them how to use them and how to say "sput-t!" and how to arch their gray backs when anything came to frighten them.

"So every day the baby kittens grew smarter. They even learned to climb to the very top of the big willow tree, and would sometimes curl up on her branches for a morning nap, — tiny little balls of silver-gray fuzz they seemed to be.

"It was then the willow tree loved them most, and the more she watched them asleep in her branches, the more she wanted some like them for her very own — some who would always stay with her and never run away.

"How the fairy queen did laugh when she heard of this wish! It seemed so very queer that a tree should want silver-gray pussies.

"But she had also heard about the kind deed of the big willow tree in saving the lives of the little gray kittens and their mother too; so, waving her jewelled wand over the willow tree, she sang: —

"'Willow fair, dear willow fair,
Silver gray pussies shalt thou bear,
Because thy heart is kind and true,
This thy wish I grant to you.'

"And so it was and always has been since.

"Every spring the willow tree and all of her kindred are decked with soft fuzzy pussies of silver gray, — and even though you frighten them they never run away."

CHAPTER XI

WHY VIOLETS HAVE GOLDEN HEARTS

ONCE in the long ago, there was a most beautiful garden where flowers of every kind grew. There were stately hollyhocks and fresh white daisies and roses and violets and pansies and hyacinths and poppies and every other kind of flower that you ever dreamed or thought about.

Early one morning, when the bees and butterflies went to pay their morning calls, they found all the flowers in a perfect flutter of excitement.

A strange knight had passed through the garden the evening before and left word for every flower that the king of the garden was coming soon on a visit, and to

the most beautiful flower he would bring a golden heart.

"To the most beautiful one was the message," nodded the crimson rose, pressing her baby buds close to her side.

"To the most beautiful one," rang out the lily bells, sweet and clear. "We heard, we heard!"

"To the most beautiful one," whispered the violets, bending their heads in prayer.

"Yes, yes," chimed in the snowdrops, one by one; "to the most beautiful one. We heard the message clearly.

"But who can be more beautiful than we, with our dresses of spotless white?

"Surely the king will choose us, and for his coming we shall save all our sweetest nectar juice, all our pollen, all that we have we shall save for him who is our king."

Thus talked the flowers together in the garden. Of course, everyone wanted

the golden heart, and everyone began to work, trusting and hoping that its blossom might be the most beautiful one.

Now in those days, snowdrops held their heads up, and not down, as now, — neither did they have green spots on their dresses then. They were snowy white, and now that the king was coming, they thought so much more about their beautiful white dresses that they seemed to forget that it was better to be beautiful on the inside than on the outside.

They even forgot — these snowdrops — to be kind to their best friends, the bees and butterflies, and refused to give them either pollen or nectar juice.

And again they forgot to say good-morning to their other friends, the lovely violets, growing so close to them and making the breath of the whole garden fragrant with their perfume.

Indeed, the violets thought so much about

making perfume for others that they forgot all about themselves, and even the color of their dresses.

But the days passed quickly in the old garden, and it soon became a bower of glory indeed, as flower vied with flower to become the most beautiful, when the king should come.

The morning-glories hung out joy-bells of white and pink and blue, climbing to the top of the garden wall that they might be first to tell the news that the king had come.

The trumpet vine climbed yet higher, even to the top of the tallest tree, that he might be first to see and welcome the king.

But the snowdrops only stood still and fretted. "See," they cried, "our dresses are losing their freshness and the nectar juice will be spoiled Listen, do you not hear footsteps?"

Yes, someone was coming down the path, but it was only a wrinkled old woman,

feeble and worn with the heat of the summer day.

As she passed slowly along, her eyes fell on the pure white snowdrops, and stretching her hands towards them, she said:

"Oh, you beautiful blossoms, can you not spare me one?"

"No, no! we have none to spare to-day," replied the snowdrops; "go away and come some other day. We are saving these for our king. Ask the violets close by. They can spare you some."

"Yes, yes," nodded the violets; "we would love to give you some. Take all you please. See, our bed is full, — enough for you and enough for our king."

And as the old woman stooped to gather the purple violets, her face seemed very fair to look upon.

"To-morrow, surely to-morrow the king will come," fretted the snowdrops; "we have waited so long!"

But when the next day came, there was only a little bird with a broken wing that passed that way. Faint from hunger, he fell in the sand near the snowdrops and begged for just one tiny seed.

"No, no!" again said the snowdrops, "we have none to spare. Come some other day; we are saving these for our king."

"Take ours," cried the voice of the violets close by; "take ours, pretty bird, we have plenty to spare."

And the wounded bird ate and hopped away, and again his face seemed beautiful to look upon.

It was night, and the breezes were just lulling the flowers to sleep when another visitor stopped by the side of the snowdrops. But they sighed and turned their heads away, for this time there was only a crippled frog with an ugly bruise on his head.

"Water, only one drop of water, pretty

snowdrops!" the frog said. "Your cups are full with sweetest nectar juice. Give to me, for I am dying with thirst."

But again the snowdrops shook their heads and turned away. "No, no!" they cried; "go away, ugly frog. We need our water to keep our dresses white, for the king is coming this way."

"Here is ours," called the violets sweet. "It is fresh and pure. Drink, tired frog, and rest among our cooling leaves."

And then something wonderful indeed happened. The frog vanished from sight, and in his place stood the king of the garden himself, clothed in gold and royal purple, and in his hands he held a shower of golden hearts which fell among the violets and lodged lovingly beneath their fragrant petals.

Then turning to the snowdrops, who had hung their heads in shame, the king said:

"Spotted like thy heart, oh, snowdrops,

thy dresses shall become, and when on them thou dost look, think and remember:

> "Beautiful flowers are those that do,
> Deeds that are loving, kind, and true,
> The long day through.

"Footsore and weary, I asked of you; hungry, I came to you; thirsty, I begged of you; but you turned me away."

"We did not know, we did not know," sobbed the snowdrops. "Come, we have saved all for thee."

But alas! it was too late, for the king of the garden had come and gone, — leaving the snowdrops with spotted clothes and heads bowed low in the moonlight.

CHAPTER XII

ORIGIN OF THE BROWN-EYED SUSANS

THERE was once a little red dwarf named Evil Eye, who lived within the heart of the blossoms on the poison-oak vine.

It was said by all the fairies that this vine had never become poisonous until Evil Eye chose it for his home, and it was his breath that really poisoned the vine so that the earth-children are afraid even to touch its leaves to-day.

His breath was poisonous, of course, because his heart was evil; and some said Evil Eye had once gotten a piece of the wicked giant's black glass in his eye, and ever since that time his eyes could see only the ugly, crooked things in life, and *never* anything beautiful.

That was very sad I can tell you. Even the flowers looked ugly to Evil Eye. The beautiful birds, the trees and water, the ferns and daisies, and the blue, blue sky — all seemed ugly to Evil Eye.

But that was not all, for there was something about him even sadder than that — every little girl or boy who was touched by Evil Eye became poisonous too, and could see only ugly things, as he did, and never anything beautiful.

They would begin at once to fight and quarrel and snarl like the little street dogs, and that would please Evil Eye very much, because if he could blow his breath into their faces *then* — why the little girl or the little boy was changed at once into a little black street dog, and ran growling and snarling through the streets. And, — it was said, — his evil breath had already changed more than one little boy and one little girl into snarling dogs.

Now the king of the country had heard about Evil Eye and sent his soldiers out many times to see if they could capture him and lock him up in his dungeon, because he was causing so much trouble in the land.

But, though the soldiers tried their best, they could never capture Evil Eye. This was because of the invisible cap he carried around with him, and when he chose to wear it, why, no one could see him! — not even with a spy glass.

Now the king had a little girl, the Princess Susan, whom he loved better than anything in his kingdom, and no wonder, since she was as good as she was beautiful.

Her hands were kind, her lips were kind, and her eyes saw only the beautiful, so that not only the king himself but everyone loved the little Princess Susan, with her long, golden hair and sparkling, brown eyes

and rosy, dimpled cheeks. She, somehow, reminded everyone of a flower, perhaps because she was so pure and sweet.

But I forgot just now when I said everyone loved her. I should have said, everyone loved her but one, and you can guess who that one was.

Yes, it was Evil Eye. He hated the little princess and her father too, and he tried and tried to blow his breath upon the little Princess Susan, because he knew it would grieve the king, and then, too, he wished to change the little princess into a snarling, snapping dog.

But how could that be? Anyone that is pure and sweet *inside* could never be changed into a snarling, snapping dog. It is only those with an evil eye that could be changed into anything ugly.

Anyway, Evil Eye could not see this, so he kept on trying and trying to get close enough to the little golden-haired princess

to touch and blow his breath into her face, and one day the chance came.

The king was in the palace gardens playing "hide-and-seek" with the little princess, and as she ran to hide behind a tree, Evil Eye slipped quickly up, and with one puff his poisonous breath touched the fair cheek of the Princess Susan, whom everyone loved, — and what do you think happened?

No, no, no! never was *she* changed into a snarling little dog, but when the king ran up to the tree to find her, there was no little princess at all. She was changed, right before his eyes, into a beautiful yellow flower, with sunny petals like gold, and a center of dark, rich brown, — just like the little girl's eyes.

Well, of course the king was very sorrowful, for while he loved beautiful new flowers, he loved his golden-haired daughter better, and for days and days he sat by the dainty,

yellow flower in the hope that it would change again into his own little girl.

But no change came, except that the flower was busy making its seeds and pollen dust and dancing in the sunshine and nodding to the breeze and calling to the butterflies to taste of its nectar juice.

So, you see, even as a flower the little Princess Susan was loving and kind.

At last the king sent for the queen of the fairies to see if anything could be done, and it was then that he learned that Evil Eye had become

blind, after blowing his breath into the face of the little brown-eyed princess, and that he had gone back to the poisonous oak vine, afraid to stir from its shade.

So you see, Evil Eye had come to sorrow, as all evil people do some day.

Now the queen of the fairies felt very sorry for the king, and she said to him:

"Cheer up, there is still hope for the little princess. Now that Evil Eye is blind, he is very anxious for another pair of eyes, and we must get them for him, — eyes that are pure and true, eyes that look only for the good and the beautiful in everything.

"If this can be done, Evil Eye will see the great wrong he has done the little Princess Susan, and will be only too glad to change her back again to her real self."

Now do you know, *I* believe the fairy queen could have changed the little princess back herself, — because a fairy queen can do anything, you know. But I rather think

she did not want to do it herself. She wanted Evil Eye to right the wrong that he had done, because that was best for him, you see, and would change him from an evil dwarf into a good dwarf.

Well, the king found out it was no easy matter to find anyone who would be willing to give his eyes to the little red dwarf.

Eyes are so very precious that no one likes to part with them, especially if they are good and pure, so it seemed the little Princess Susan was ever to remain a flower after all.

But at last someone was found, and guess, if you can, who it was?

Not the fairy queen, — far from it!

It was only a little worm who had spent his life in the king's garden, plowing the earth soft about the plants and doing his best to help them grow.

He liked to look on the bright colored flowers, and the soft, white clouds, and the

dancing sunbeams, — they were very beautiful to him.

But if he could make the king happy and give the little Princess Susan back to him, why, that would be greater joy, don't you think?

And so the little worm gave his kind, pure eyes to the red dwarf, Evil Eye, and sure enough, just as the fairy queen had said, no sooner had Evil Eye got his new eyes, than he began to do kind things right straight away, and the very first thing he did was to change the dear little princess back to her real self once more.

But the pretty brown-eyed Susans we still find blooming in old-fashioned flower yards, reminding us of the little Princess Susan and the very kind little worm, who, since he has no eyes, and cannot see, still works away beneath the damp ground, plowing about the flower roots and helping to make the world beautiful for others to see.

CHAPTER XIII

WHY THE SWEET LABURNUM COMES FIRST IN THE SPRING

TWO little seeds were talking together one day about being planted.

"I do not think it would be nice to be planted at all," said one little seed. "Think of being covered over in the dark, cold ground like that! It must be dreadful."

"You make me think of the very first seed that ever was planted," said old Mother Nature, with one of her sunny smiles.

"There is always somebody who must be the first to do things, no matter how unpleasant they are, and it always takes somebody who is strong and brave.

"Now the sweet laburnum was a plant of that kind, — she showed others the way, and

to-day you will find her frail, yellow blossoms the first to greet us in the early spring, often blooming in old-fashioned flower gardens when the sleet and snow are on the ground. Her story is a pretty one, and runs thus: —

"Long, long ago there was a time when on the earth there bloomed no flowers at all. There were no lacy ferns, no waving grasses, no trees, no blossoms, no growing plants of any kind. Everything was bare and brown.

"And, of course, all the birds and flitting butterflies and dusky moths and tiny ants and other insects were dying of hunger and thirst, because they could not live, you know, without something green and growing.

"The Prince of the Kingdom of Love heard of this suffering and went to the earth himself to see what the trouble was.

"After walking for miles along barren fields and bare roads, with no sign of anything green and beautiful along the way, he at last reached a large store house, the floors

and shelves of which were covered with seeds of every growing plant under the sun.

"Seeds, seeds, seeds! nothing but seeds everywhere, and every little seed lying fast asleep.

"'Why, little seeds,' said the Prince of Love, 'how can you lie here asleep when the outside world is dying for your help? You are needed to clothe the fields for hungry cattle, to deck the trees, to make the flowers, to feed the hungry, and shelter the weak.

"'How can you sleep? Why lie you idle here?'

"'Because we are afraid,' said the seeds, whom the voice had awakened. 'We would like to make the world beautiful and help those who hunger and thirst, but we cannot bear the idea of being buried beneath the ground first in order to do this.

"'It is so cold and dark under the ground. Can you not change us into flowering plants

now, as here we lie, without having to bury us beneath the ground? Then we would gladly grow to brighten the earth.'

"Then the Prince of Love was very sorrowful indeed, because he knew how impossible this would be. No seed can become a fresh, growing plant without first being buried beneath the ground. Everyone knows this.

"So, turning his kind eyes on the little seed nearest him, the Prince of Love said:

"'Could *you* not, little seed, forget your sleep in the cold, dark earth and remember only the glad awakening?

"'Would you rather lie here in your rough, brown body covered with dust and decay, rather than sleep in the earth for a season and come forth changed into a living, growing plant crowned with fresh, green leaves and glorious blossoms? Only think of that glad awakening!'

"Now the little seed, which was that of the

sweet laburnum, had no answer ready for the Prince of Love; but when he had gone away she thought and thought about his words, and the more she thought the more she felt that she would like to change herself into a living, growing plant that would brighten the outside world. Then perhaps, if she showed the way, other seeds might follow and change themselves into growing plants.

"She felt very happy when she had made up her mind about it, and touching the little seed next to her, she said:

"'Little brother, I do not *know* whether it is true that if I bury myself I shall rise again into a fresh and growing plant. I can only believe what the Prince of Love has told me and trust that it is true.

"'So I shall slip through the little crack in the storehouse and bury myself in the earth. You must watch for me, and if I awake tell the others, that they too may believe.'

"Then the little seed slipped quietly through the crack, and the Prince of Love must have seen, and was glad, because he sent down the raindrops, who pressed her gently beneath the earth, and the wind, who covered her snugly over, and then as the little seed dropped asleep beneath the brown earth she felt happier than she had ever felt before — perhaps because she was trying to show the way, and to help make others happy.

"Somehow she did not feel afraid as she thought she would, and kept singing to herself even in her sleep this soft little song:

"'I shall arise,
I shall arise;
Some day, somehow,
I know not now,
Only, I shall arise.'"

"For many days the sweet laburnum slept and dreamed beneath the barren earth, and then one morning she opened her drowsy

eyes and felt some one lifting her up, and a voice, tender and sweet, like that of the Prince of Love, was calling, 'Arise!'

"And then, before the little seed was fully awake, why, she found herself growing up, up, up, right through the ground — no longer a little, hard, brown seed with her beautiful life shut within, but a glorious living plant, fresh and new.

"By and by there was a crown of delicate, yellow blossoms for her too, and her joy was so great that she called in ecstasy to all the seeds she had left asleep in the great storehouse; when they saw her joy and beauty they longed to be like her, and one by one they slipped through the same little crack and buried themselves in the earth.

"And so the world became fresh and beautiful again, but the little plant who led the way is still the first to greet us in the early spring."

CHAPTER XIV

ORIGIN OF MOON FLOWERS AND MORNING-GLORIES

ONCE upon a time there were two little sky fairies. One lived in the moon palace, and the other lived in the sun palace, — and like all other fairies, they had work to do in the earth-world.

Now the little fairy who lived in the sun palace was called the dawn fairy, because it was she who came to the earth just at the very peep of day and wakened everything; while the other little fairy, who lived in the moon palace, was called the twilight fairy, and he came just at nightfall to put the world to sleep.

So, you see, one was a day fairy and the other was a night fairy, and the queer thing

about them was that if the little dawn fairy should stop by the way to play, the day would be too long for the earth-children, and if the little twilight fairy stopped to play, the night would be too long for them; and then, of course, the night and the day would be so mixed up the earth-world would not know whether to wake or to go to sleep.

The fairy queen had told the little fairies all about this, and she told them, too, if they *ever did* stop to play, why, they would at once lose their beautiful wings, and go tumbling down to the earth-world where they would have to stay. For how *could* they ever get back to the sky without wings I should just like to know?

Now the little dawn fairy was very beautiful indeed.

She always dressed in the rainbow colors, with slippers, wings, and crown of shining gold, and as she came dancing toward the

earth, a soft, rosy light shone about her head and left a crimson pathway leading from earth to sky, while the tinkle, tinkle, tinkle of many golden bells made music and kept time with her dancing feet.

You know she must have been beautiful, and you do not wonder that the earth-children loved her, as did the flowers that she awakened, and the bees and butterflies and drowsy birdlings sleeping in their nests.

They liked to greet her as she came dancing through the gardens and orchards in the early, early morning, singing and ringing her shower of golden bells: —

"Wake, wake, wake!
The morning sun is shining,
Wake, wake, wake!
The birds are sweetly singing.
Wake, wake, wake!
The flowers are gayly blooming,
Wake, wake, wake!
And greet the day."

Then, all in a twinkle, the whole world was astir with work and joyous laughter, which mingled with the melody of the dawn fairy's bells.

Throughout the long day she danced and played with those in the earth-world, until, by and by, they grew weary of work, and then she slipped away to the sun palace again and in her place came the twilight fairy to lull the world to sleep.

His clothes were made of the stuff the fleecy clouds are made from, all spangled over with silver stars. His wings were white, and his slippers and crown of frosted silver, and as he danced down the milky way, across the heavens, he scattered a ribbon of silver stars which trailed behind him and sparkled like diamonds along his pathway.

Very softly, very silently tripped the twilight fairy to the earth-world, his sweet, silver bells making music for his feet.

"Tinkle, Tinkle, Tinkle,
Ring the twilight bells,
Rest little flowers,
Slumber little birds,
The night time is here.
Tinkle, Tinkle, Tinkle,
Hear the bells, silver bells."

Fainter and fainter grew the sound to the drowsy world as the twilight fairy danced over the hills, — kissing the soft cheeks of the flowers good-night, crooning lullabies to sleepy birds in their nests, and hastening the children off the streets, seeing them tucked into soft, white beds, whispering gently, good-night, good-night.

And now comes the sad part of my story, for the two little sky fairies forgot what the fairy queen had told them, and stopped to dance by the wayside.

It happened in the night time just before the morning, when the fairy twilight had started home again, and met face to face

the beautiful fairy of the dawn, trailing her rosy light behind her and singing to the music of her golden bells.

He had never been quite so close to her before, though they had passed every day on their way from the earth to the sky. Perhaps the little twilight fairy had always looked the other way, — I do not know, — but now he thought she was the most beautiful fairy he had ever seen.

And then, before either one of them knew it, they had stopped in the pathway and were dancing and laughing with each other, while silver bells and golden bells rang joyously together.

But soon, very soon, their laughter ceased, for the little sky fairies felt themselves falling, falling, — down, down to the earth-world, — and when they reached the ground, — why, their wings were gone! just as the fairy queen had told them it *would* happen

if they stopped by the wayside to dance or play.

Of course the fairy queen knew at once that the night and day were mixed, and she felt very sorry for the little sky fairies who had disobeyed her.

A whole ribbon of little sunbeam fairies were sent to ring the bells of dawn and waken the earth, and it is said the earth-people have ever since had *one* night that is longer than any other in the year.

Then too, she sent a whole band of little moonbeam fairies to ring the twilight bells, because *one* little fairy might forget again.

And what do you suppose happened to the little sky fairies who had disobeyed?

The fairy queen touched the little twilight fairy with her magical wand and changed *him* into a moonflower vine, and you may have seen his silvery white bells which blossom only in the twilight.

The beautiful dawn fairy she changed into

a morning-glory vine, — her bells are of many colors, to match those of the rainbow hues, and she blossoms only in the morning time.

They both climb high, it is said, because they long so to reach the sky again, but though they never can, they still ring their beautiful bells to tell you of the twilight and the dawn.

CHAPTER XV

WHY PETUNIAS ARE STICKY

THE Lady Petunia awoke one morning in a great fright.

Somebody had broken into her house the night before and stolen away the nectar juice and pollen dust which she had been saving up for her friends, the bees and butterflies, who helped her nurse her seed babies.

Who could it have been?

Not the butterflies, because they, too, were special friends of the Lady Petunia, and besides, they would not do such a thing.

But the Lady Petunia knew grieving would do no good, so she set to work and filled her cups again with fresh nectar juice, and went to bed that night with a happy heart.

And when she awoke the next morning, what do you suppose had happened?

The nectar juice had been stolen again and not one drop was left in her cups.

That *was* enough to make her angry, I am sure, but flowers are not like some children I know, so the Lady Petunia set bravely to work once more and filled her cups with nectar juice, fresh and sweet.

Perhaps it was her love for her small seed babies that made her so anxious to keep plenty of nectar juice on hand.

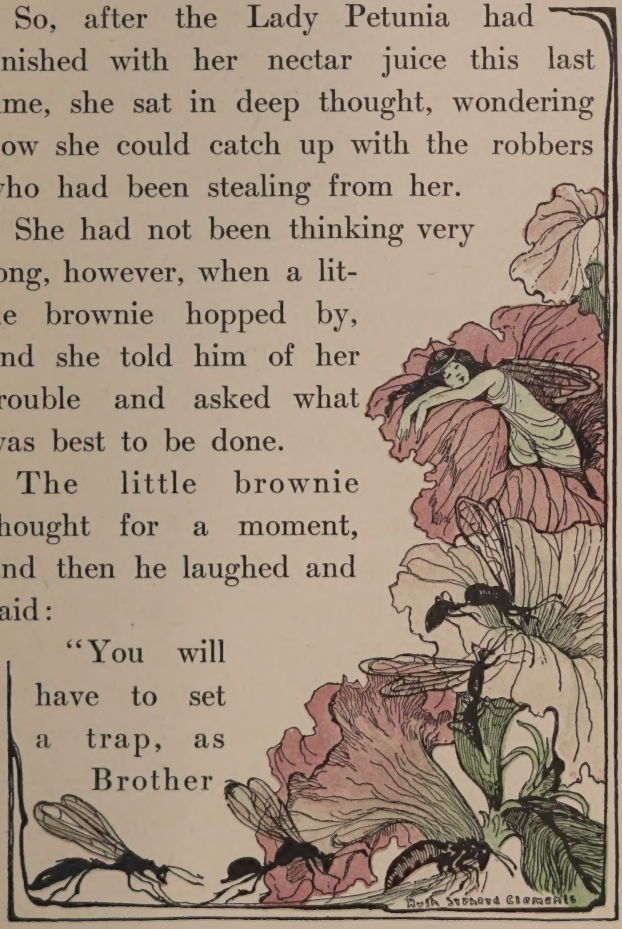
Not that the seed babies cared especially for it themselves, but the bees and butterflies *did* you know, and the Lady Petunia knew they might stop visiting her if she did not sometimes treat them to her delicate nectar juice. And if they stopped coming, why, there would be no one to bring her pollen dust from across the way, which she needed so much to ripen and make her seed babies grow.

So, after the Lady Petunia had finished with her nectar juice this last time, she sat in deep thought, wondering how she could catch up with the robbers who had been stealing from her.

She had not been thinking very long, however, when a little brownie hopped by, and she told him of her trouble and asked what was best to be done.

The little brownie thought for a moment, and then he laughed and said:

"You will have to set a trap, as Brother



Fox did with the tar baby. That was the only way he ever caught up with Mr. Rabbit, who was stealing his milk and butter."

So, when the Lady Petunia had heard all the tar-baby story, she laughed and laughed, and then she set to work to make *herself* a tar baby.

Not a real tar baby, of course, because the Lady Petunia could not make one of those, you know, but she *did* make something very, very sticky, and spread it all over the under side of her blossom and all down the stem.

I do not know whether you can guess *why* she did this or not, — unless you know all about Mr. Rabbit and the tar baby.

Anyway, the little brownie hid beneath a leaf to watch that night, and he saw a whole line of black robbers leave their cave in the ground and climb up the stalk of the Lady Petunia's house — one behind the other — and when they reached her blossom and

started in after the nectar juice the little brownie went off into merry peals of laughter, for every little robber stuck fast in his tracks; they could n't go forward and they could n't go backward.

So there they stuck like Brother Rabbit and the tar baby — hard and fast — to the under side of the Lady Petunia's blossom, and though they wiggled they could n't get away, but stuck all the closer, and there, early the next morning, the Lady Petunia found them and knew who the robbers were that had been stealing her nectar juice. Do you?

They were very small and very black, and they begged and begged to be turned loose, and because the Lady Petunia's heart was kind, she consented, and the robbers promised to steal her nectar juice no more.

One by one she set them free, but ever since the Lady Petunia has been very

careful to make plenty of sticky gum to spread beneath her blossoms and on her stem. You can feel it for yourself when next you pull a petunia.

When all the other flowers heard about the Lady Petunia's trap to catch the robbers, they thought she was very wise indeed, and many of them began to do the very same thing. So now you know why some flowers always feel sticky. They are only on the lookout for little black robbers.

CHAPTER XVI

WHY CHESTNUTS ARE IN PRISON

ONCE upon a time the water fairies made a piano for the Singing Brook.

It took them days and days to gather up enough rocks to make the piano, but they worked hard, and by and by there was a pile of smooth white pebbles and gray granite stones, of all shapes and sizes — some of them moss-covered, which made the music very soft.

These they placed across the pathway of the Singing Brook, that she might find it as a sweet surprise, and the songs she sang as she trailed her waters across the fairy piano were beautiful indeed.

She sang of the soft twitter of woodland birds, of the sunlight sifting through the

trees, and of the dance of the moonlight zephyrs with the leaves.

One morning two little brownies, hand in hand, walked through the forest in search of something to do. They were dressed in suits of velvety brown, with deep collars of lace about their throats, and sashes and slippers of brown.

On and on through the woods they walked, forgetting that the Wide-Spreading Chestnut Tree had told them not to go far.

She it was who was their only mother, and gave them a place to sleep in her shady hollow. She it was who loved them most, and lent her branches to the spinning spiders who spun for them their beautiful collars, and she it was who hushed them to sleep at night with story and song, and sheltered them when winds and rain raged, — safe from all harm.

A loving stepmother was the Wide-Spread-

ing Chestnut Tree, and the little brownies knew no other.

But to-day they had wandered away from her watchful care, and were following along the mossy path that lay like a ribbon of green through the woods.

By and by they came to the side of the Singing Brook, and clapped their hands at the pretty piano the water fairies had made for her surprise. But the Singing Brook was fast asleep.

It is sad to tell, but the little brownies thought it would be great fun to throw stones, so without stopping to think who had gathered the stones and placed them there for the Singing Brook, they began to throw, and threw them all away.

First, they tried to see which could throw higher; then, which could throw farther. And then they began throwing at the spotted frogs that hopped in the grass, and at the frightened birds, hurrying home

to their birdlings, and at the bushy-tailed squirrels, and at the little white rabbits who, with ears laid back and short tails raised, scurried through the woods as fast as ever they could to get out of reach of the flying stones.

By and by all the stones were gone, and not one was left for the pretty Singing Brook. When she waked up and found someone had taken away her pretty piano she was very sad indeed, and ran quickly away to tell the water fairies, crying as she ran.

"Hush, hush, pretty one!" said the queen of the water fairies; "a little brook should only sing. We will try and find thy pretty piano, or else make thee another one."

So up and down the banks the water fairies searched, but no piano could they find, — so at last they climbed into their sunbeam chariots and rolled away through

the forest woods, hunting every nook and corner for the piano of the Singing Brook.

By and by they found a stone here, and a stone there, and a stone yonder, and, — yes, by and by they found the two little brownies, each with a stone shut close in his hand, — lying asleep in the hollow of the Wide-Spreading Chestnut Tree.

"Wake, wake!" cried the water fairies, sprinkling rain drops into their faces. "Why have you taken away the Singing Brook's piano? She is sad and wishes it back again."

"Oh, we did not know!" mumbled the drowsy brownies. "We are sleepy; let us alone."

"Did not know?" stormed the water fairies. "Did not know? That is never an excuse for anyone! Those who do not know should be kept in prison and not allowed to roam the forest woods.

"To-day we have found delicate flowers

bruised and broken, we have found frightened birds with blood-stained wings, we have found timid white rabbits, stiff with fright, and squirrels with broken limbs! And yet, you did not know!

"To be stoned as *you* have stoned shall be your fate, that you may do no more mischief, — come."

But the poor little brownies did not want to be stoned, and they were too stiff with fright themselves to move, so I do not know what they would have done had it not been for their stepmother, the Wide-Spreading Chestnut Tree.

She was both grieved and surprised at what she had heard; surprised to hear that the brownies she sheltered and loved would take away from the Singing Brook, — grieved that they would stone the timid wild creatures of the woods. What a pity they did not know!

"Kind fairies," she said, rustling her

leaves ever so softly, "will you listen to me?

"The brownies you see there have no mother; perhaps that is the reason why they did not know. Because of this *I* have sheltered and loved them, though when they strayed away I could not follow to teach them right from wrong.

"Spare them, then, from the cruel stones, I pray thee, and when they have gathered up again the stones for the Singing Brook, send them back to me.

"I shall make for them a prison house, wherein they shall be safely locked, and never shall they stray therefrom, unless taken out by the fairies themselves."

"It is well," replied the water fairies; "thy wish is granted thee, kind tree, because of thy love for these mischievous brownies, — but see to it that they stray no more from thy side, lest they forget and other mischief do."

Then, whirling their swift little sunbeam chariots, the water fairies galloped away through the forest, leaving the brownies to gather up the stones they had thrown away, and carry them again to the Singing Brook.

Some of them they could never find, and for this reason the song of the brook is sometimes sad.

The Wide-Spreading Chestnut Tree kept her promise, and all through the moonlit night she worked away on their prison room, making it as dainty and snug as possible.

Outside it is round and green and very full of stickers. But inside there are two velvety cradles, as soft as down, and fit for the cradle of a king's baby.

To-day you may find it out in the woods, with the brownies locked snugly within, still dressed in their suits of velvety brown.

Do not try to let them out of their prison, — you will surely stick your fingers.

And do not pound them out with stones, either, — for the sake of the Wide-Spreading Chestnut Tree.

Wait, it is the frost fairies who will turn them out! They will come tripping through the silent woods, scattering their white powder everywhere. They will tap gently on the prison doors of the little brownies, and will laugh when the doors burst open and the little brownies come tumbling down to the ground beneath the Wide-Spreading Chestnut Tree.

Peep into their thorn-clad prison, so green and round, and you will see the snug little cradles as soft as down.

CHAPTER XVII

WHY THE IVY IS ALWAYS GREEN

THERE were once two small plants that grew on the edge of a rough, red ditch. One of them was an ivy plant and the other a tiny fig tree.

It was early in the morning when they first awoke and looked around to see how they liked the world.

"I think it is an ugly old world," said the young fig tree. "I see only a rough, red ditch with dirty water flowing below."

"Oh, it is a beautiful world," replied the ivy vine. "I see clouds floating on high, and sunshine, and such lovely trees and flowers growing over on the other side of the ditch! Let us try to make *this* side beautiful, too.

"I will cover the rough, red places with pretty, green leaves, and you can decorate with your wonderful pink blossoms. Come, let us try."

"No," said the small fig tree, "I would not waste my time trying to make this ugly old place beautiful.

"Now if, like my mother, I could have grown in the soft, rich earth of the garden, I would have tried to do something, but here there is no use."

So, from day to day, the little fig tree grumbled. Nothing pleased her. If the sun shone she said it was too hot; if the rain fell she said it was too wet; and if the wind blew she said it was too cold.

But with the little ivy vine it was very different, and she was as happy as a lark from early morning until night.

"Whether the sun shines or whether the rains fall, it is God's will," said the little vine, "and I am well pleased. I

shall do all I can to make my side of this ditch beautiful, and I shall begin to-day."

And so she did. Though she lived only on the edge of the red ditch, she spread out her leaves day by day, running here and there and yonder, hiding this red spot and that red spot, until by and by nothing could be seen but the beautiful green leaves of the ivy, and she did not stop until every ugly spot was hidden by her graceful garlands.

"Oh, it is beautiful, beautiful, now," cried the ivy; "only look!"

"Yes," said the fig tree, crossly, "but no one sees it. What are you going to do now? Dry up, I suppose, since you can never cross the ditch."

"Oh, but I *shall* cross the ditch," said the ivy vine. "I shall keep on trying until I do. There is so much on the other side I can do to help make the earth-world beautiful. Surely there is a way to cross."

So she ran out little tendrils, reaching here and there, searching everywhere for a way to cross the ditch. And at last, by climbing down to the edge of the muddy water, she reached a rock half way across, where she stopped for a moment to rest and wonder what next to do.

"You 'll never get across," laughed the fig tree. "I told you so! You might as well make up your mind to dry up and stop trying."

"I shall *never* stop trying," called back the ivy vine. "There is a way to cross *all* ditches, and I shall cross this one. Wait and see."

"Bravo, my pretty one!" said the voice of the old oak tree close by. "Cling to my roots there. I am old and worn, but it is a joy to help one like you; reach out and I will pull you up."

So, with one huge stretch the ivy vine clung tightly to the twisted roots of the

old oak, and was soon laughing merrily on the other side.

"Dear me, but you *are* a brave little vine," said the old oak. "I have been watching you across the ditch all these months, and you have changed its ugly, red banks into a real thing of beauty.

"Now there *was* a time, once, when flowers and grasses grew there, and ferns fringed the edge of the brook, and it was beautiful, indeed. Every fall I shook armfuls of crimson and yellow leaves upon the bank, but that was long ago, before the great forest fire which robbed me of my limbs and leaves and left me old and worn.

"What a joy it would be to me if only I might have my branches decked in leaves one more time, — especially do I long for this in the glad spring time, when trees and flowers are robing themselves for the joyous Easter Day.

"Sad, indeed, it is to me, to know that I shall be clothed no more in a fresh dress of delicate green, like your own pretty leaves, dear Ivy."

"But you shall," said the ivy vine, clapping her hands; "you have helped me cross the ditch to-day, and I mean to give you an Easter dress. Watch me."

Now vines had never climbed high before this. They had only run along the ground and down the hill, and over walls, but *this* little ivy vine wrapped her delicate arms around the rough bark of the old oak, and began to climb her first tree.

She pulled and stretched, and stretched and pulled, until little by little, up, up, higher and higher she went, leaving a trail of rich, green leaves behind her. It was a lovely sight.

"See!" she called to the old oak; "I am bringing you a most beautiful Easter dress, — how do you like it?"

"Beautiful, beautiful!" laughed the old oak. "You make me feel young again. But what will you do when you reach my branches?"

"Why, I shall keep on climbing," replied the ivy vine. "When I give a dress at all, it must be a whole dress, don't you know? I shall not stop until I have covered every branch, as I did the bare spots on the ditch."

And so she did. Every day she climbed a little higher, until by and by every limb on the great, old oak was completely hidden by the beautiful leaves of the ivy. The old oak laughed in delight, as she looked on her beautiful Easter dress of fresh, rich green.

Now the queen of the fairies who, I told you, was always on the watch for beautiful deeds, stood under the old oak on Easter Day and wondered at the beautiful sight. It made her glad to see the joy of the old

oak in her new dress, and of course she knew who had given it.

So, turning with a smile to the ivy vine, she said, "Because you have tried to make others happy and to make the earth beautiful your leaves shall never fade. Forever and forever they shall stay beautiful and green. Cold shall not hurt them nor summer's heat destroy them, and wherever you go you shall gladden the hearts of man with your freshness and beauty."

Very happy, indeed, did these words make the pretty ivy vine, and ever since she has been climbing over the earth-world, hunting bare places to make more beautiful.

Stone walls and churches and houses, — no place seems too high for her to climb, and never does she weary in making fresh Easter dresses for the trees that are old and worn and cannot make them for themselves.

But the little fig tree, — what do you suppose became of her?

At that time every fig tree was known to bear clusters of pretty pink blossoms among their leaves. But what was the use of beautiful flowers that would not blossom to make the world beautiful?

None at all, the fairy queen said. So, ever since, the blossom of the fig tree has been shut up within her figs; you can break them open and see for yourself.

The little fig tree felt very sorry that she had been so foolish, and she said to herself, "Though I cannot show my blossoms to the earth-children any more, I can make my figs sweet and fresh for them to eat, and they will then love me, as they do the pretty ivy vine, who brightens every spot she touches."

CHAPTER XVIII

WHY ROSES HAVE THORNS

THE fairy Trueheart came to the earth-world one day in search of a good child.

All day she walked the streets of a great city where many children were at play, scattered here and there in merry groups, on the sidewalks, in the parks, and along grassy squares.

The fairy Trueheart liked to watch the children play, and though they did not know a fairy was near, she stood close to them and listened to see if their words and deeds were always kind.

But there was a shadow on her sweet face to-day, for, as I told you, she had come to the earth-world expressly to find a

good child, and her search had been in vain.

She had patiently stood among group after group of children, and just as she *thought* perhaps she had found the good child, why, she would straightway hear ugly, cross words, and this *very* little child whom she had thought to be good would join with the others and fuss and quarrel because the game did not go just right. Then they would call one another ugly names, and the fairy Trueheart would turn sorrowfully away and hasten on, because she knew the good child was not there.

And then she would stop by some other group, where children with fair faces and sunny hair were at play, and the fairy Trueheart would say, "Surely, a good child plays here." But, no! for just at this moment there would be a piercing scream, and she would see a very little boy sob-

bing and crying because a great big boy had taken his marbles away.

And so once more the fairy Trueheart would hasten on her way, only to find in other groups the same sad sight, — perhaps a baby girl crying, with face tear-stained and soiled, because the sister whom she loved best of all had slapped her, and then ran away and hidden so that the tiny footsteps might not follow.

Poor little baby sister! The fairy True-

heart stooped down and kissed the tears away from the sweet blue eyes, and taking the chubby hand in hers, led her away to her home.

Perhaps, after all, she *might* find the good child there. But no! in the children's homes it was the same. They would fuss because one had a larger slice of cake or another a redder apple, until the fairy Trueheart was sad indeed. Placing her gentle hand on the heads of the children, she looked down into the depths of their clear, bright eyes and asked why it was they acted thus, when it was so much happier a way to do the right.

But the children only bowed their heads and answered softly, "It is because we forgot."

And thus the night had come, and the fairy Trueheart had gone back to fairyland very sorrowful, because she had failed to find the good child.

"What shall I do?" she asked over and over again. "What shall I do to help the earth-children to remember?"

That was a hard thing to answer, because, while the earth-children's eyes are bright and beautiful, they do not always see the right, and though their ears are keen and good, they do not always hear the right.

And even though their hands are soft and fair, they do not always do the right, nor do their feet keep from going astray.

And so the fairy Trueheart thought and thought until far into the night, and at last a plan came to her.

"I shall gather a great basketful of tiny thorns," she said, "and at night while the earth-children are fast asleep, I shall place deep down in each child's heart a tiny, tiny little thorn.

"The earth-child will never know the thorn is hidden there until he *forgets* to do

the right, and every time he forgets, why, the little thorn will prick him, and this will cause him to remember."

The plan pleased her so much that the fairy Trueheart took the basket on her arm at once, and went in search of the tiny thorns.

But alas! though she searched and searched, no thorns could she find, because in fairyland then flowers did not have thorns, as many of them do now.

At last she entered the Garden Beautiful, and told her story to the queen of the flowers, — an exquisite white rose.

"Beautiful indeed is thy mission, Fairy Trueheart," said the rose queen, "and for the lack of thorns it shall not fail.

"I myself will be glad to bear the thorns for you, because it is my joy to help, and I should be, oh, so glad! if through me, only *one* little earth-child should remember to do right.

"Come to me again to-morrow night, — thy thorns shall be ready for thee."

Thus spoke the lovely rose queen, and the fairy Trueheart hastened away with a glad heart.

And so it was that the fair rose queen bore her first thorns. Others, seeing her good work, asked to join, until by and by all the roses and their kindred delighted to bear the tiny, tiny thorns, which the fairy Trueheart buried deep within the heart of every little earth-child to help him to remember.

But the blessing returned again to the rose queen, as a good gift always does. For when roses began to bloom in the earth-world to please the eyes of mortal man, the dogs and cows and other animals of the earth might have eaten or trampled the roses underfoot were it not for these same thorns, which are always there to prick them and drive them away.

And you, little earth-child of to-day, should you ever feel the prick of a tiny thorn within, think of the fairy Trueheart and remember.

The roses are here, and are watching you, though you may not see the fairy.